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INTRODUCTION

136 113 coasts there is a wonderful richness—one might well spend an hour or so with J. A. Harvie-Brown's *A Fauna of the Outer Hebrides*. The Hebrides area is one of the twelve faunal regions of Scotland, and is becoming increasingly the spotting-ground for amateur and professional ornithologists. They see birds such as the skua and red-necked phalarope, breeding at the southernmost limits of their range. The golden eagle, corncrake and red-throated diver, though found in other parts of Scotland, are more plentiful in the region because of the low incidence of human interference; buzzard, merlin and peregrine falcon are also found. Many birds are peculiar to the area: there are Hebridean subspecies of twite, dunnock, song-thrush and wren. Since 1962 the blue tit has begun to colonise the Stornoway woods. And 1960 saw the first arrival of the collared dove, an incomer which, like many a human, has taken a liking to the place and settled down to establish its flourishing community. On Gallows Hill, a low rising overlooking Stornoway, is a large rookery; rooks first reached the island in 1893. Jackdaws arrived at the turn of the century and are now quite numerous. As might be expected, the adjacent harbour and foreshore of Stornoway provide a suitable area for purple sandpipers, turnstone, heron and redshank. Gulls abound. The estuary area just north of Stornoway is the haunt of widgeon, shellduck and teal, among many other birds; a ruff was seen there in 1956. Melbost beach has the largest ternery in the islands, with arctic, common and little terns sharing life together.

The birds on the shore line are mostly waders, divers, ducks and seabirds. Cormorant, shag, gannet, fulmar, arctic skua, terns, gulls of all kinds and oyster-catchers can be found. The full variety of the island's bird life can be seen by visiting not only those sloping lands to the sea, but the cliff-tops, which often have their own numerous bird colonies. The sea's edge, with the push-pull tides, is indeed another area with abundant life of all kinds. Bladderwrack *(fucus vesiculosus)* and knotted wrack *(ascophyllum nodosum)* are there in great quantity, the latter now a significant factor
137 in seaweed-processing activities (Chapter 6). From time im-
memorial, seaweeds have been a natural resource in the island's
824 economy, used as manure to supply the necessary element of
241 organic matter to keep the land in good heart. Keeping the sea-

172 anchorage in the Loch. The circle enclosing the cairn consists of thirteen stones and has a diameter of some 37 ft. The avenue, which approaches from the north, contains nineteen stones. It is 27 ft wide and 270 ft long; it forms the long limb of the cross plan of the design. Southward was another shorter avenue of twelve stones; and eastwards and westwards two lines of four stones each, thus completing the cross design. The stones range in height from 3½ to 15½ ft. Each is packed in at its base with small stones to keep it firmly in position. There are signs that Callernish, like Stonehenge, was built in stages. The material, unlike that used for Stonehenge, was from local sources (often Lewisian gneiss).

In the Sound of Harris, on the small island of Berneray, there are two stone circles of some interest. Scattered through Harris and Lewis there are also many solitary stones to be seen: at Borvemore, in Harris, which appears to have been one of a circle, and at Nisabost, also in Harris, where stands Clach MhicLeoid (MacLeod's Stone). Another standing stone is on the edge of the rocks by the shore, just below the church, on Boreray, one of the now-uninhabited islands in the Harris Sound. In Lewis, the menhir which figures most in story and legend is the Clach an Truiseil, on the gentle slope of a hillside near to Balantrusal, on the west coast. Nineteen feet of this stone are above ground. It is about 6 ft in width; nearly 4 ft at its maximum thickness. The tradition in Lewis is that the stone was erected to commemorate a victory by the Morisons of Ness over their long-standing enemies the MacAulays of Uig; of course the stone is older than any of the Lewis clans.

• [113] For a full inventory of the ancient and historical monuments, one is referred to the 1928 Report of the Royal Commission which was set up to record such constructions in the Outer
172 Hebrides. Apart from those items of pre-Christian years, there are
346 a number of other structures with an ecclesiological reference: Teampull Eoin, at Bragar; Teampull Pheadair, at Shader; Teampull Bhrighid, at Mid-Borve; Teampull nan Cro Naomh, at Galson; Teampull Ronaidh, at Eoropie, and others. These latter, together with the Tigh nan Cailleachan Dubh (house of the black old women), indicate a reasonable degree of saturation by some form of religious recognition; the names suggest a period about halfway

[TEXT CONTINUED ON PAGE 37]

AGRICULTURE AND FISHING

THE CROFTER

241 The pursuit of agricultural processes, their growth, development
and improvement, to establish a foundation for a secure society
has never been easy on the island. The unyielding nature of the
[135] base rock, Archaean gneiss, its hardness, its non-porous property,
have all contributed to the resultant pattern and character of
society which emerged. Though one is tempted to define crofting
as an agricultural activity, it is also something much more intangible:
[113] a way of life. To quote the Napier Report on *The condition of the crofters and cottars in the Highlands and Islands of Scotland*
[181] (1884): 'Habit and local affection bear so great a sway in
the actions of mankind, that Highlanders will be found who would
rather be proprietors in the mountains of Skye, or the wastes of
Lewis, than on the fertile plains of Manitoba.' 'There is the
Island of Lewis, with poor, peaty soil covering the Archaean
gneiss, but with a crowded, lively, vivid community,' said the
Taylor commision in 1955 (Commission of Inquiry into Crofting
Holdings).

The Highland crofter is the subject of an extensive literature.
[657] A special authority, the Crofters Commission, exists solely for
the purpose of caring for his needs. He has special rights and
privileges which are safeguarded by the Land Court. Crofters'
unions have formed themselves into a strong federated wall for the
system's defence.

241 Socially, the term 'crofter' means, on the island at any rate, a
landholder who cultivates his own (arable) holding, his croft. He
423 shares the common pastures with his fellow-crofters, each of whom
233 has a right to carry a sum of so much stock, the 'souming'. These
[571] common pastures or grazings are a social link of some considerable significance, forming the basis for the crofting township, as
[632] distinct from the communities set up under the influence of some
[621] agricultural land use such as hamlet or village, where there are
both small-holders and true farms, and the only communal land
is the village green or common. For instance, outside the crofting
counties area the main unit of Scots life in the country is the
farm, with its tied cottages. Then come the full-time small-holdings important in the north-east and the southern Highlands.

according to the amount of barilla (its great competitor, a carbon- 175*
ate of soda made from plant ashes) which found its way into the 824
British market. When the American war interfered with the im- 323
ports the kelp price was as high as £22 per ton. Prices began to 388
decline about 1810, and from 1822 successive reductions in duties 433
on salt and barilla resulted in the decline and demise of the kelp
industry. As a consequence great distress appeared in those districts which had founded their whole economy on seaweed.

The weeds of most value to the industry, because they yielded [137]
most salts, included *laminaria digitata*, *laminaria bulbosa*, *ascophyllum nodosum* and *fucus serratus*. One ton of kelp yielded an average of 8 lb of iodine, with certain quantities of chloride of sodium, chloride of potassium, and carbonate of soda. When subjected to special treatment and distillation, 2-3 cwts of sulphate of ammonia, and several gallons of naphtha, paraffin oil, and volatile oil were also derived.

The fishing industry, discussed in the previous chapter, took 175*
over where the kelp-making industry left off and became another 228
king-pin in the island economy. By the end of the last century it
seemed set fair for continuing prosperity. In 1900, harbours were [503]
being planned and built with State aid in Uig, at Carloway, Ness [653]
and Tarbert. Then 1914 came, and with it sweeping changes in
international trade. Island fishermen were left workless with (511)
wrecked and rotting fishing boats. In twenty years the number of Scotland's fishermen was halved; the remainder were all but ruined. The islanders' fate mirrored this pattern.

Yet another significant source of income for island families for 175*
almost 200 years came from the men in military service, who 701
either sent money home or returned home with their gratuities 434
and pay. In the wars of the last century many enlisted in the Highland regiments, the Navy and the Merchant Marine. Even today, the income from this external activity is not insignificant.

EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY ECONOMY

175*
Information and statistics about the economy of the island in the 113 •
middle of the eighteenth century are to be found in Walker's *Economical History of the Hebrides or Western Islands of Scotland* ; his MS is in the British Museum.

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Most of the world loves an island. Thus most of the world's island-groups have their own literature, mainly written by those attracted to islands as such, their motives sometimes rational, sometimes emotional, sometimes stemming merely from curiosity. For well on 1,000 years now, visitors drawn to the Hebrides have afterwards itched to curl their fingers round a pen of sorts to let others know of their discoveries, their feelings, their impressions and the nature of the land and the people they saw. The general public, too, has had a correspondingly avid, sometimes avuncular, interest in the life of these almost-last outposts of the European continent.

The bibliography for the island of Harris and Lewis is extensive: general articles of an informative and entertaining nature, official and personal reports and documents, novels, sketches, newspaper items (not always as accurate as they should be), topographical and social descriptions, and so on. These have fixed in perpetuity most aspects of life on the island, particularly from about 1750. Many items are of course out of print and available only in the older-established public libraries, in university libraries and in private collections of Highland books.

Some information about the island is in the form of unpublished manuscripts, and in books printed privately and with a limited circulation, published on the subscription system. Occasionally, certain oblique sources contain references to the isle folk, their way of life, and the conditions in which they lived and worked. These sources include, as might be expected, collections of verse in Gaelic and English by native authors, and folk-music and songs which reflect, often with startling clarity, the feelings and reactions of the people to the various social and economic burdens imposed on them by influences not always of their own making. The oral folktale and tradition field is yet another fruitful source of information, though a working knowledge of Gaelic is usually necessary to extract the essence.

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184 Comparisons at the present day are most illuminating.
[791] In the Hebrides one may pass from Calvinist Lewis-and-
Harris to Catholic Barra, through South Uist, where
Presbyterian and Roman Catholic dwell, side by side, in
mutual respect. Although their home life, economy and
language are the same, the influence of a comparatively
[121] recent divergence in religion is marked. Such Island
evidence, present and past, forces one to re-examine conclusions upon life in the Lowlands accepted until recently, and to seek for the truth upon earlier forms of life in common and for their meaning today throughout 'the North and West'.

175 Ancient elements of unity, and later ways in which
423 these were broken, adapted or remade, region by region,
are being unravelled. The Old Estate Plans, made at the
427 outset of the agricultural revolution, show these immedi-
621 ately before the re-planning of fields and farms (*circa*
1750–90). These plans also reveal the existence of still
178 earlier types, not otherwise recognisable even on the spot.
[184] With their rentals (when available) they reveal the ways
in which old joint farms were placed under a single tenant, as in Lothian, or were split up among several tenants, as in Ayrshire.[1] From such geographical data, both the economic and the deeper social aspects of rural life emerge with new clarity. Such data may be linked to Planning Surveys of land and rural life for tomorrow.

621 Now, although so fundamentally equalitarian within
427 themselves, these hamlet communities of the Gael were
subjected to the overlordship of a chief or laird, either
directly or through an intermediate gentleman-tenant, a
[174] 'tacksman'. History, with archaeology read in history's

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[1] For Lothian, see Arthur Geddes (1938 and 1951); for Ayrshire, see
[172] J. H. G. Lebon, *Scot. Geog. Mag.*, Vols. 62, 1945 (pp. 7-13); 63, 1946 (pp. 100-110). Further references in Bibliography.

[113]

121 cannot be changed, as for the future which can—lies in the intensity of its communal traditions, extinguished elsewhere. Much has gone—many of the fishing crews are [178] disbanded and team-work has weakened—but much lives on, and much has been learned. The Gaels have still to [184] make their full offering to English-speaking civilisation. To do so, they must find their own fulfilment within the framework of the Highlands of Scotland.[1]

2. *Scottish Crofts, Farms and Labour-teams: the Rural Unit Today*

184 105 When, in thinking of Scots countrymen, we differentiate between the men of the Highlands and Isles, the Lowlands and the Borders, what stamp of occupation, society and economic class best characterises the three regional types? The differences we note between them are due not only to their place of birth and region, but to their occupational [433] discipline and social ways. Imagine, for example, a Gael, a Lowlander and a Borderer, all three of whom follow the same calling—say, a trio of farmers, of shepherds or farm servants, or of independent, full-time small-holders. When brought together each trio would find they shared similar interests and aims in their work, and all that follows from it. In fact, they might have more in common than three Gaelic-speaking men who differed from one another in vocation, although, as Gaels, the latter group would find a bond in culture and kinship. But a fourth type of Scot, the crofter of the North-west townships with whom this book is concerned, would stand out, distinctively, from any other, whether his home were Zetland or the Hebrides. Thus not only their home or region differentiates Scots countrymen, but their calling or class; and their families

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● [113] [1] A. Geddes and F. D. N. Spaven, *The Highlands and Isles* (1949).

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134 Scotland had begun to lag since her ~~pioneering~~ effort from
1750 to 1880.

178 Fortunately, Scotland is now recognising that in peat
[654] reclamation, on the one hand, and the improvement of
rough grazing, or at least its maintenance, on the other,
[185] there lies a problem of national importance. More than
half the land surface of the country consists of mountain
311 and heath land used for grazing, not including 'deer
forests' from which sheep had been altogether excluded.
The arable land of Scotland is less than one-sixth of the
whole, with about one-twelfth in addition under permanent
grass. Moreover, since most of the enclosed land is distant
from the area of rough grazing, the latter is partly wasted.
The difficulties of soil and sea and of the whole economic
situation are great, and must be understood.

(B) THE ISLAND LANDSCAPE, LAND-FORMS AND GEOLOGY

1. *Aspects of the Isle*

131 Lewis-and-Harris, the most northerly isle of the
Outer Hebrides, and the largest, is roughly lozenge-shaped.
Although only thirty miles in width, it is over sixty miles
in length. Attached to Harris parish is the little isle of
[103] Berneray, half a dozen miles farther south. It puzzles
the stranger that, while the archipelago of the Outer
[823] Hebrides is best known to the inhabitants as "The Long
Island", Lewis (or the Lews) and Harris, which actually
form one island, are spoken of as separate islands.[1] Yet
nothing could be more natural. Before the making of

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[113] [1] "The Long Island", Gaelic *An Eilean Fada*, as a name for the Outer Hebrides has the sanction of traditional usage, as Alexander Carmichael noted in his Introduction to *Carmina Gadelica* (vol. i, 1900; and 1928).

133 [131]

southwards to Skye, bounds the Archaean gneiss and the stratified Torridonian sandstones of the North-west.

Given the possibility of ' continental drift ', Scotland's NW. crustal block may have ' drifted ' along the line of the Great Glen south-south-westwards for a distance of some sixty miles, relatively to the rest of the Highland mass. The primary evidence leading to this suggestion is the identification of the Foyers and Strontian Granites, situated on opposite sides of the Great Glen some sixty miles apart, as mechanically displaced portions of one original mass. Such horizontal movement may be related to the great Hercynian mountain-building movements of Carboniferous times so marked in south-east England.[1] This movement would have formed a major factor in leading to the development of the present structure and rock-types, plan and land-forms of the NW. coast and the Hebrides, Inner and Outer.

3. *Structure and Rock-types of the Island*

The axis of the Island lies NNE. to SSW. It consists of an ancient rock mass, the ' block ' character of which is revealed by the geometrical mosaic of the coastlines and lochs. In simple terms, the fault lines are comparable to the long, fairly straight cracks to be found in any hard block of even consistency, split under stresses and strains. These systems of faults lie in at least two main directions. The main, axial trend is followed by South Harris and by much of the east coast. Each trend seems to have other faults lying at an angle to it, though not necessarily at right angles. Hence we find more than four main trends for the lines of coasts, lochs, rivers, bounding the hill blocks. These must be due to somewhat different stresses

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[1] W. Q. Kennedy, *Q. J. Geol. Soc.*, vol. cii, part i, 1946 (p. 41).

133 most northerly outlier, yet, in the main, one is struck not by the variety of rocks (except for the 'Stornoway Beds') but by their homogeneity. It is structure, causing the uplift of certain masses relatively to others, more than differences in rock-type, which has guided the work of erosion, in sculpturing both the Island's plan and the details of its forms. Submergence of the land has fretted the coastline into a zigzag line of ridge-capes alternating with valley-mouths flooded or 'drowned' by the sea, as inlet and loch.

316 Historically the gneisses were of little value. The fact
[174] that they tend to split still helps the Islander in building,
as it helped his ancestors when they raised the great stone
[172] circles at Callanish on East Loch Roag. Except where
they are very basic (non-acid) in composition, they make
[135] poor road metal. Yet the gneisses are not quite devoid
of economic minerals, which include masses of pegmatite,
and the only large body of anorthosite or lime-feldspar
rock in Britain, conceivably a source of alumina for glass
[439] manufacture.[1] Two feldspar quarries opened at Lingarbay
and Northton in South Harris in 1941 employed sixty men
during the war, the mineral being despatched from Leverburgh for use in the Staffordshire Potteries in the manu-
[178] facture of porcelain insulators. The higher grade mineral
in Scandinavia and the better transport facilities there led
to closing the quarries, with little hope of their reopening.[2]

4. *Land-forms and Sea Floor*

133 To the faulted structure is due not only the Island plan, but the highland in middle and south, uplifted rela-

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• [113] [1] C. F. Davidson, "The Archaean Rocks of the Rodel District", *Trans. Roy. Soc. Edin.*, vol. 61, 1943, pp. 71-112.

[2] J. B. Caird, "The Isle of Harris", *Scot. Geog. Mag.*, vol. 67, 2, 1951, p. 92.

133 (2) cliff-cut, where exposed stretches have been undermined by the Atlantic storms; and (3) sandy, where bays like Broad Bay have been filled in, or where shingle bars have enclosed a sheet of fresh water, as on the west coast (north-west of Stornoway) from Barvas southward to Dalebeg. The types of coast are illustrated by Plates II to V.

As to the sea floor—so important to fish-life and to navigation—the west coast of the Outer Hebrides borders a well-featured continental platform, which is higher in the north and south but lower in the middle. The irregularities suggest a former land-surface dissected by rivers with mature drainage systems.[1] The contours are revealing, as shown in the coloured map at the end, at intervals of 10 fathoms (60 feet). The sandy machar beaches of western South Harris, visible at low tide, form part of a wide, shallow shelf extending for a dozen miles off west South Harris to a depth of no more than 20 fathoms, and thence southwards along the machars of Uist to Barra; but the coast falls away steeply round most of Lewis and along the rocky east coast of 'the Long Island'.

5. *Glacial Drift or Boulder Clays, and Shell Sand*

Underlying the peat is the drift, which is spread over
133 all but the rockiest parts of the island. This is not only exposed at every roadside cutting but is laid bare in wide
314 areas around the villages. Here peat-cutting during the centuries has removed the peat, layer after layer, to the
[356] topmost turf, left aside after cutting until the last. When
[134] even this turf is removed for annual thatching, the bare

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[113] [1] S. Ting, B.Sc. (China). *Geografiska Annaler*, Band 19, 1937, pp. 62-83.

(B) VEGETATION

1. The Vegetation-types and Pastures of the Highlands and Isles

137 311 In order to see the Island problem in true proportion, the types of vegetation and rough pasture in the Highlands and Isles should be outlined. Dr. Hardy's reconnaissance botanical survey of the Highlands, with its coloured map, has been utilised in the compilation of *A Reconnaissance Map of Vegetation of Scotland.*[1] The latter has been boldly simplified in Fig. 7.

The Highland pastures are of two main regional types, eastern and western, with the addition of a few great stretches of peat moor. East of a line from Stirling to Inverness, heather is dominant, as it is on the heights around the Dornoch Firth, from north of the Cromarty Firth and Ben Wyvis to the border of Caithness. To the west of this, heather, though still found, is mixed with [233] grass and sedges. The grazings of the North-west Coast have been the adopted home of Cheviot sheep for over a century, for Cheviots are grass-feeders which cannot thrive on heather-tips. True, acid 'Dry Grass Moors' lie inland from the Beauly Firth and Dingwall. On the rest of the West Coast from Gairloch and Loch Torridon south to Kintyre, 'Marshy Grass Moors' with but little pure [233] heather clothe the lower slopes. These give way on higher slopes to 'Mountain Pastures', reaching up to about 2500

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[113] [1] M. E. Hardy, *Esquisse de la végétation des Highlands d'Écosse*, Paris, 1905; also *Scot. Geog. Mag.*, 1906, June number with map, and May number with text. A. Geddes and L. D. Stamp, *A Reconnaissance Map of the Vegetation of Scotland* (Ordnance Survey, 1/625,000: 10 miles to inch), 1953; explanatory pamphlet in the press. A résumé by L. D. Stamp has appeared in his *Land of Britain: Its Use and Misuse*, 1948, based on Tansley, *The Vegetation of the British Isles*, 1946.

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3. *Plant Communities of the Island: Hill Moor, Peat Moss and Machar*

The types of pasture in the Island should be compared with those elsewhere. The peat moors of Lewis resemble those of northern Sutherland. The machar lands of the Uists, and of Tiree and smaller isles, surpass those of Lewis, while on the mainland and Inner Isles raised beaches provide workable, well drained soils. The 'rocky hill pastures' of our Island correspond to the rockier 'mountain pastures' and 'plateau summits' of the Highlands, and the 'fair' and 'hill pastures' of Lewis rather to their widespread 'wetter moors'. Grazing conditions are of course, similar in crofting areas alone. The edging of heather above the sea-cliffs of the Island and on the western mainland forms a picturesque element of the landscape, seen from a passing vessel, but only a narrow strip of the pastures. The plant communities shown on the Map of Vegetation (Fig. 8) must now be outlined.[1]

[134] (1) On the *Rocky Pastures* the scattered patches of soil are covered by a low and close sward, almost exclusively of perennials and grasses, such as bent (*agrostis*), common and brown, sheep's-fescue grass and wavy-hair grass (*festuca* and *Aira*); small sedges and mosses, with club moss and lichens towards the summits; heather, and fine-leaved bell-heather (*Erica cinerea*); and flowering plants like thyme, bird's-foot trefoil, tormentil and smooth heath bedstraw (*Galium*). Those rocky pastures prevail in the Forest of Harris (Plate XI).

[311] (2) *Fair and Hill Pastures.*—Below the bare rock domes

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[1] An authoritative flora of the Island is in preparation by Miss M. S. Campbell, F.L.S., British Museum (Natural History). Her "Flora of Uig" (Lewis) has appeared (Arbroath, 1945). For Dr. Hardy's tentative list of plant names see A. Geddes, *Scot. Geog. Mag.*, vol. 52, 4, 1936.

137 by reclamation, notably at the Macaulay Demonstration
311 Farm on the 'peat moss' of Arnish Moor (south of
185 Stornoway), then too small to be shown, and in South-west Harris where new crofts were laid out in the thirties.

137 The six main types of vegetation in the Island may be grouped as three. First are the Hill Pastures and Moors: (1) 'Rocky' among the bare hill-tops of Harris and Uig, and (2) 'Fair' on favourable slopes, which merge into (3) 'Marshy Grass Moors' of coarse grass and sedges, heath and rushes. Secondly come (4) the vast brown 'Peat Mosses and Moors', either smooth and wet, with sedge and cotton grass, or channelled and cut up into hags; near the broken edges of the island cliffs this expanse is often fringed by (5) the 'Heather Moor'. Thirdly, by the sandy bays, are (6) the 'Machar lands', *i.e.* the 'Sandy Pastures', rich with clover; though narrow, this coastal plain is all important to stock-rearing and potato-growing, and so to settlement. In traditional terms, these three groups form hill moor, peat moss and sandy shores: ***monadh*, *mòine*** and ***machair***.

(c) CROFTING AND THE CROFTERS' YEAR

1. *Place of Settlement and Choice of Work—Past and Present*

175 Lewis and 'Harrey', as they were called four centuries
114 ago, were well described by Dean Monro,[1] and his description is fundamental to the present scene. "Harrey is very
311 fertile and fruitful for corne, store and fishing, twice mair of delving is in or of teilling", which appears to mean

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● [113] [1] Dean Monro, *The Western Islands of Scotland . . . in 1549*, reprinted by A. Mackay, Stirling, 1934.

827 Islanders themselves sometimes talk of a lowered
stamina and poorer health today than in the past.
178 Inbreeding is widely held to account for this. Even if health
582 be really poorer, this explanation is untenable, since
marriage outside the village has greatly increased in the
166 last century. Everywhere there is movement along the
roads; a school placed half-way between two villages
[871] fosters early acquaintance; immigrants trickle in from the
mainland, and emigrants occasionally marry beyond the
Island. Moreover, the people of certain villages were
transplanted in large numbers eighty years ago, as from
143 Valtos, Uig, northward to Shawbost. In any case,
inbreeding itself does not produce degeneration; for though
it may "fix" or bring out harmful tendencies where there
is already some poor or dangerous strain, it can also fix
good characteristics in a healthy population.[1]

178 All these changes were hastened and reinforced by two
177 new, revolutionary means. First, the physical mobility
suddenly brought to an area with no railway by the motor-
166 car, van and light lorry-bus; then, towards the end of the
inter-war years, the penetration of the Gaelic-speaking
home by the ceaseless voices of broadcasting.

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[113] [1] J. A. Thomson and P. Geddes, *Life: Outlines of General Biology*, 1931, vol. i, p. 473.

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613 of the Norsemen, lay a succession of earlier periods. A
phase of primitive settlements is traceable in archaeological
172 remains and in recent and contemporary survivals.
174 It is shown in the physical race-traits distinguishing
those in one part of the Island from those in another.
Fragments of tradition telling of the first Christian
missionaries survived the Norse invasions and settlements,
dated from A.D. 800 or before, down to Haco's defeat on
the Clyde at Largs in 1256. These fragments can be
linked to chronicles and to later tradition, on which they
throw fresh light.

[144] A survey of the archaeology has been published,[1] but
comparatively little, as yet, on race. Yet different communities
are distinguished by marked racial types or strains.
Although many, indeed most, of the race-strains of the
Island must have entered it in prehistoric times, some are
linked to tradition, and history accounts for the more
[141] recent immigrants. The striking element of race in the
Outer Hebrides is a broad-headed type prevailing from
Barra to the Lews, accompanied by medium stature and
dark hair; it is also found across the Northern Minch.
But within the Island are notable differences.

829 Variety of race being accentuated by difference in ways,
the communities still comment pointedly upon one
[538] another! For instance, an old saying is not forgotten:
"The folk of Cladach, but the gentlemen of Uig!"
(*Muinntir a' Chladaich, ach daoin' uasaile Uig*),
[433] 'Cladach' being the western 'Beach' district possessing
[632] ploughland but poor fishing, which covers the modern
[133] parish of Barvas (excluding the north-west cliff-promontory

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[113] [1] Royal Commission on Ancient Monuments, *Outer Hebrides, Skye etc.*); 1928. V. G. Childe, *The Prehistory of Scotland*, 1935; *Scotland Before the Scots*, 1946.

141 144 172 little sign of Norse blood, can hold their own as fishers with the men of Ness.

174 Third, it is still commonly stated not only that the "great majority" under the clan system were "without any legal status", but that their tenure "depended on the good will of the chief or tacksman".[1] 174 [613]

174 675 [175] As the last lawbooks of the Gael were taken from Lewis by its first mainland lord in 1611—never to be heard of again—it may well be that, as recognised in the Northern Isles, so in the Western Isles, peasant tenure was permanent according to regional law. In practice, mere 'goodwill' is so uncertain a quantity that if this statement had been true, it is hardly credible that communities could have remained so stably rooted as their race-types show them to be. Evictions of groups or individuals at the whim of chief or tacksman would have broken down their [178] [184] homogeneity of race. In the Lowlands, where eviction had become so frequent by 1500 and insecurity for the mass of the country people has prevailed ever since, such localisations of race would be unthinkable and do not exist except in certain fishing communities who possess a pride, almost a caste-code, of their own: the Newhaven fishers within Edinburgh remain apart, with a dialect and a dress of their own. Great stability of tenure—in fact as in customary claim—is shown by the racial homogeneity of Gaelic communities.

174 Lastly, it is common to state that the nobility and gentry of a countryside constitute its 'old' or 'original' families. It is true that some land-owning families seem 'old' compared to recent purchasers—successively the merchants and lawyers, venturers and planters of the

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[113] [1] From a representative report on the Highlands and Islands, that of the Scottish Economic Committee, 1938 (Historical Preface, p. 9).

114 aborigines in India—lovable people when unspoiled by
174 tyranny, caste or industrial exploitation, as I can testify.[1]
Yet Gomme, like many since, leaves the reader with an
impression which must be re-examined: that the Islesfolk
are the representatives of a backward race who have clung
to predominantly superstitious, pre-Christian customs and
beliefs. As a people, the Gael received and welcomed
Christianity in one of its earliest historic forms, and main-
[128] tained its spirit through poverty and famine. To this
inheritance we shall turn in Chapter VII, when the rhythm
of life and its changes have been followed out in the following chapters.

174 To begin with, the briefest outline of historic sequence
613 is all that can be recapitulated, the Island annals having
been recorded in the excellent Brand Report (1902), and
[114] by W. C. Mackenzie (1903 to 1937). Politically and
strategically, the age of clanship may be thought of as a
period of struggle between the Islands and the Mainland
[175] to the south or east. The long-drawn conflict of Clan
Campbell of Argyll with Clan Donald—whose Chief was the Lord of the Isles of which Islay and Skye were the two dominant, western keys, and Lewis and Harris the northern outposts—offers a parallel to the conflict of MacKenzie of Kintail with the last MacLeods of Lewis. Obscurity veils the early origins of the Island clans, with their mingled Norse and Gaelic lineage, but chronicles are more reliable by the time of forfeiture of the lordship of the Isles to the Crown in 1493. The MacLeods of Dunvegan, chiefs in north-west Skye, continued to hold Harris until late in the eighteenth century, and they maintained an indirect connection until the nineteenth.

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[113] [1] A. Geddes, *Au pays de Tagore: la civilisation rurale du Bengale Occidental*, Paris, 1927.

175 much of Britain and Europe until about 1700. A modern
511 parallel may be found in Asiatic lands with the frequency
162 of famines alternating with periods of recovery or, in others,
the long-drawn misery of chronic under-nutrition and
171 endemic disease. In modern Europe, only international
[231] or civil war can now bring such extreme widespread misery.
And as peace brings partial healing, so in the Island past, when good seasons returned after famines, the life of the family renewed itself.[1]

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593 The narrow margin of survival even in good seasons, the risks of the bread-winner's death and of his family's destitution, and the need of co-operation in so many tasks made the family too small, weak and precarious a unit to stand alone. Even with relatively little division (or specialisation) of labour, and in spite of its apparent self-sufficiency, the family had perforce to link itself with wider circles of community life.

(B) JOINT LABOUR BY SMALL TEAMS: THE EVIDENCE OF TENURE IN 1715–26

175 Romance is hidden among the rent-rolls of the Seaforth
241 estates, all of which were forfeited when the Earl rose for
'King James VIII' in 1715. For of the rents withheld
427 from the government until 1720, on the mainland at least
[642] the loyal clansmen paid a considerable portion to their
[613] exiled chief, styled 'Marquis' by 'King James'. But the

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[113] [1] The 'ups and downs' of a peasantry living on the margin of subsistence and subject to severe disease can be studied in India, 1871–1941, where the 'net' or mean change has to be correlated with the 'variability'. This wide problem was reviewed in a series of papers to 1948; "The Social and Psychological Significance of Variability in Regional Changes of Population", with examples taken from Indian villages. (A. Geddes, *Human Relations*, Vol. 1, 2, 1947–48; cf. *Geog. Rev.* 1942 and 1948; and *Geog. Journal*, 3, vol. 98, 1941).

175 rent-rolls record something of more vital and enduring
241 concern, the unit of community life in the Lews. This was
427 the 'conjoint' or 'group' farm of the labouring peasantry
—though it was overlaid in parts of the Island by the
[476] formation of tacks held by gentleman rent-farmers.

Both rolls are Judicial Rentals, that is to say, the
175 tenants, great and small, were convened by the Govern-
241 ment Commissioners and examined on oath as to the rents
427 they formerly paid; the accounts were then entered and
totalled. Because of the Jacobite resistance, the small
656 amounts of rent and the maladministration of the Forfeited Estates, doubt was cast upon the first rental, of 1718. A second rental was therefore compiled in 1726, upon a different system, which confirms the correctness of the first.[1] All were named, including those absent or 'valetudinary'.

175 Owing to the Island's comparatively smooth land sur-
361 face and access to the sea, the people could group themselves
as they chose. Whereas in the Highland mainland many
[182] a pocket of land is too small to keep more than two or three
[184] families alive and no fishing grounds are available, in Lewis
the people could join together in teams of four, five or six,
[433] to work a hamlet-farm or penny-land, definable as a
[476] joint-farm of unit size, and to man a boat with "four to
row and one to steer".

175 The first point of interest is the equality of the shares,
each man paying exactly the same as his fellow-tenants for
241 his 'farthing',—a fourth, or other equal share of the farm.
427 An average share of rent was a little over 10 shillings sterling
[436] with additional payments in farm produce, though not (as

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[113] [1] A. Geddes, "Conjoint Tenants", etc., *Econ. Hist. Rev.*, Second Series, vol. i, no. 1, 1948, pp. 54-60. This reconciles the evidence of 1718, reproduced in the Brand Report (1902), Appx. O, and that of 1726, edited by J. R. N. Macphail (1916).

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after 1800, John Walker wrote that run-rig, " formerly very general in Scotland, was abolished with improvements but still subsists in many parts of the North. A number of tenants of the same farm have a common pasture for their cattle, and the arable is divided among them, by ridge and ridge alternately, which each cultivates for his own behoof. This gives them all a common interest in the crop and, when there was no inclosure by dyke or hedge, might be of some advantage " in giving each person some protection " against the encroachments of his neighbour's cattle ". Speaking of joint possession this time, though without reference to survivals, Walker wrote that in the Lowlands " in old times a large farm might be occupied by a number of conjoint tenants who cultivated the farm in common and divided the produce. In this way the interest of each became the interest of the whole. They were ready, and were frequently called upon, to defend the common crop and cattle against depredations. There was then a necessity for such an allotment of land, especially in the Border country and in the Highlands." The team, in other words, was a unit of defence. But " nothing like improvement can be expected from farmers placed in this situation . . . [and] no community can ever equal the carefulness and industry of an individual in the management of his affairs ".[1]

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So far as it goes, such an analysis is incontrovertible; for Walker was one of many contemporary observers who could contrast both the " improvement, industry and carefulness " of the best individuals under a vigorous landlord, with the sluggishness of old-fashioned ways on backward estates. The fundamental reason for sluggishness was that

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● [113]

[1] John Walker, *Oeconomical History* [descriptive account] *of the Hebrides*, 1808.

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241 through division of labour or united effort, but simply for
423 the sake of mutual stimulus and pleasure!

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476 (D) THE SHARING OF MACHAR, MOOR AND SEA

Embracing several joint-farms, each with its team or
175 crew, came the township. The township had not only its
632 common pasture, it had a special extensive system of
241 run-rig on sandy, coastal machars, as in parts of the Island
423 and in Uist—a system continued to this day.

On the machar of Barvas, cultivation strips are still
632 re-allotted periodically, as they were annually on all the
Island machars. The machars behind the 'storm-beach'
241 dunes of the Outer Hebrides closely resemble one another,
423 from the Butt of Lewis to Barra Head. The immemorial
[178] system was noted by Walker and more fully by Carmichael,
who called it 'intermediate run-rig' to distinguish it from
[127] the run-rig of older joint farms on boulder clay, and it persists at the present day.[1] In North Uist the machar land is
laid off in large scatts or fields. Each scatt is divided into as
many rigs as there are crofts in the township. There may
be a dozen scatts in all, and usually half the number are
lying out in natural pasture, but they are put under crop
in rotation, so that each year one or two scatts will be
brought into cultivation, and the others left out after a
[625] course of cropping. When a scatt is to be brought into
cultivation the township 'constable' (who holds sway under
the district ground officer) appoints a day for allocating the
rigs.

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[113] [1] Walker (1808); Alexander Carmichael, appendix xlviii and xcix, pp. 213 ff. and 451 ff., Report of the Crofters' Commission, 1884. Socially these form the most significant evidence in this great Report. See also "Grazing and Agrestic Customs", *Celtic Review*, 1905. Ct. C. Macdonald, *Scot. J. Agric.*, 1919. See also his lively accounts of machar and pasture: *Highland Journey: Suil air ais*, 1943.

175 533 [614] nurse in the family. Born about 1615 in Rodel (south-east Harris), she composed her last elegy (to Sir Norman MacLeod of Island Berneray, Harris) in 1705; she may even have composed her last great song (on the birth of the nineteenth chief) a year later.[1] Towards the end of the century (between 1664 and 1693), Mary's younger contemporary, Rory Morison was bard at Dunvegan, being known as the Blind Harper, *An Clarsair Dall.* A Lewisman, Rory could not have found adequate patronage as a bard in that Island, the chiefs of Lewis having passed away. Morison is stated to have been a descendant of the Gaelic judges or *brieves* of Ness and the son of a minister, and he was to have entered the Church along with two brothers, later ministers. But smallpox blinded him, and he turned to oral, not to written 'literature', perhaps to our ultimate gain.[2]

Here then were two bards, man and woman, whose fame is growing, rather than waning, in our own day. While Mary was illiterate, however rich in lore, Rory, with his clerical home and family tradition of Gaelic jurisprudence, must have begun to read Latin and English, perhaps Greek, and also Gaelic, though not reaching Hebrew (as his brothers would) before he was struck blind. Mary, so far as is known, was the first to compose what may be called 'court' song in simple words and in the 'strophic' verse-form of rhythm and assonance enjoyed by all Gaels, Scots and Irish, since her time. Lacking the learning of the dying school of classical bards, Mary is more personal [614] than they, "a lyrist not less than panegyrist"; and she is more spontaneous. The same seems true of Rory. Yet [622] the themes of the classical bards were renewed by these

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[113] [1] James Carmichael Watson, *Gaelic Songs of Mary MacLeod*, 1934.

[2] John Mackenzie, *Sar Obair: Beauties of Gaelic Poetry*, 1877.

175 did another Zacharias, closer than Thomas to the Lewis
554 tree, who worked nobly with Wilberforce for the emanci-
614 pation of the slaves.[1] Still another connection was a
621 Canadian emigrant, grandfather of the late T. B. Macaulay,
[668] LL.D. Alexander Mackenzie, the explorer of the Mac-
kenzie River, was a descendant of Lewis tacksmen.
MacIvers and Morisons also distinguished themselves.
[178] But the sons and daughters of crofters had to await the
[871] provision of education in English before they could rise
in trade, learning or war; hence few Lewismen of the
greatest Lewis name, MacLeod, achieved eminence until
the twentieth century.

175 As for the peasantry, the interposition of a new or
554 enlarged class of tenantry between themselves and the
565 superior must have meant that they had to labour on the
427 tacksman's home farm, and no doubt pay more in produce
or cash. Hence the Gaelic saying that if the position of the small (joint) tenants was bad, that of the subtenants was worse, "the Evil One itself". Following the long fight with the Fife Adventurers, hardship may have been greatest where mainland tacksmen were placed above the joint tenants; but even under MacAulays and MacIvers rents may have been raised and some of the joint freedom lost which was still enjoyed in Ness. Whatever adjustments had been made in an earlier period had to be re-made with the beginning of Seaforth's new order.

In the following generations, contradictory accounts of lairds, factors and tacksmen are given by contemporary observers. Certain of these insisted that, given the poverty of the lands as a whole, the chiefs and landlords, factors and tacksmen, were the saviours of their people. Yet even among those who supported authority in general, there was

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●[113] [1] Charles Booth, *Zachary Macaulay*, 1934.

175 the last of these in outlying villages after 1918. When
554 Matheson purchased the Island in 1844 he left the fishing
565 industry to the curers, great and small. Particularly before
427 most fishermen could speak and write English, the local
curers were best fitted to take action not only in marketing
228 but in approaching the Government to aid the construction of piers and harbours. On the whole, their long ties with place and people, coupled with education, made them useful leaders of a community in which leaders were needed to adapt life to a changing economy. Here and there one or two small farmers survive, a little apart from the main townships. Aided by a long cultural tradition, they meet changing times by combining with their inheritance a sane selection of new elements.

175 Looking beyond the Island to the mainland, the time is
621 approaching for a fair assessment to be made of the historic
parts of chief and landlord, factor and tacksman. Not only
622 is there an enlarging body of documentation, but a growing
427 understanding of communal strands in tradition and of
184 changing social economy seen in relation to geographic
factors of place and region. And in the Gaeldom, condi-
[178] tions varied greatly between bordering areas from Mar to
[182] Kintyre,[1] and the heartland of tradition in the Hebrides.
In the Island, one must remember the fundamental opposition, yet the recurrent readjustments of chiefs and people. These, and not only individual differences in character and conduct, explain the differences of experience and opinion
[829] quoted above. The people's belief, so frequently given
to me thirty years ago, that it was bad factors, not the landlord, who taxed and harried them unjustly, expressed an idealistic faith in a chief, rather than the facts of economy
[565] and history. For lordship begins with the imposition of

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[1] A. McKerral, *Scot. Hist. Rev.*, 1947.

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621 rents, and its end is in sight when these cease to provide
622 for the lord's desires.

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(E) STORM AND GALLEY, BATTLEFIELD AND REGIMENT

174 The peaceful round of daily life formed the most
enduring test of the mutual loyalty uniting the commoners
614 of the clan, and linking chief to people. Yet the tensest
577 ordeals came in hours of danger faced together, whether
[501] at sea in a small fishing boat or a many-oared galley, or in
war in a clan company. The Gaels' own records must
[726] speak for them. Many a song of the Isles conveys the
team-spirit of the crew though without describing its men.
174 And although Mary MacLeod's song of MacLeod's Galley
be irretrievably lost, there survives one epic poem portray-
614 ing the ship, the storm and, man by man, the crew who
501 warred against the waves and won. Alexander Mac-
538 donald's *Birlinn of Clanranald* is unmatched in Gaelic,
and probably in English, verse for its portraits of the crew
in action, from steersman to 'look-out'. The flowing
metrical translation by Pattison with Hugh MacDiarmid's
vivid prose helps to give the English reader some vision of
a crew of Gaelic freemen at their best.[1]

174 The poem opens in slow traditional rhythm with "the
614 Blessing of the Ship", the arms and the crew. Then the
bard, speaking for the stately skipper, "incites the sixteen
501 oarsmen to row" out of the bay, and they row to a rousing
539 shanty, a *Iorram*. Next, in readiness for the voyage and

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577 [1] Thomas Pattison, *The Gaelic Bards* (2nd ed.), 1890 (pp. 1-28); and
Hugh MacDiarmid (Ed.), *The Golden Treasury of Scottish Poetry* (pp. 65-85),
[113] 1940. Cf. A. Macleod (Ed.), *Sar Orain: Three Gaelic Poems*, Glasgow,
1933. The different themes of its sections, each in its own metre, have been
published separately, in *The Songs of the Hebrides*, and elsewhere.

174 ready to leap fore or aft: " Quick to move as the mountain
614 hare . . . or the hounds after him; quick to climb as a
501 squirrel in the spring-time ". Then comes the stirring
539 evocation of the storm, testing each man's mettle and the
577 discipline of all, until at last, their ship battered and themselves bruised and weary but undaunted, the crew reach Islay and round the sheltering point of Carrickfergus. There, with thanks to the High King, they drop anchor, the *birlinn* rides in peace, and all find meat and drink and rest.

175 As at sea, so in war, loyalty could rise to heroism in
614 individuals and corps. Young men were attached to their chiefs by chivalrous leadership in warfare, both before
721 1745 and later. The Highlanders' high character con-
703 trasted with that of most Regiments of the Line, too often disciplined with the lash while demoralised by debauchery. From Lewis the Islesmen went out to the Seaforth or the Ross-shire Highlanders. General David Stewart of Garth, historian of the Highland regiments and people, wrote of these two regiments that again and again their courage and coolness in battle were proved.[1]

175 Not less striking was the record of Gaels among civil
648 populations, whether in Britain, as in the 'Forty-five, or abroad. In Germany in 1761 and 1762 much was said of the Highlanders' kindness, " for the boors were much better treated by those savages than by the polished English and French ". Similarly in the Low Countries in 1814 and 1815, they were *enfants de la famille* and " kind as well as brave ". The mayor of Brussels declared that they " called forth the attachment and esteem of all ", and the inhabitants requested him " to endeavour to detain the 78th (2nd battalion Ross-shire) regiment of Scotchmen in the town, and to prevent their being replaced by other troops".

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[1] *Sketches of the Highlanders*, 2 vols., 1821-2.

771 xviii. 19-20). The worldly wise might think that the
794 spiritual fare of these poor folk must have been lean indeed;
while others, having heard much of the Highlanders'
[173] 'pagan' superstitions, may think even worse! The evi-
[538] dence from which to judge is found in survivals from a
rich lore, and for most readers seen but 'darkly' through
prose translations from the poetry of a tongue now known
to few.

771 The richest collection is Alexander Carmichael's *Car-*
538 *mina Gadelica* (*Ortha nan Gaidheal*).[1] Others were made
by the Rev. Fr. Allan Macdonald of Eriskay, and by the
Rev. Kenneth Macleod with Mrs. M. Kennedy-Fraser in
the *Songs of the Hebrides*. Included here are unpublished
verses given by crofter-friends in the Isles and others from
Fr. Allan Macdonald's collection,[2] hitherto untranslated.
What still remains has come down to us only by narrow
771 escapes. One is reminded of 'Father Allan's' early
539 death, after nursing his parishioners through an epi-
demic; and Carmichael's escape from drowning as "on

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[1] *Carmina Gadelica: Ortha Nan Gaedheal.* Hymns and incantations with illustrative notes on words, rites and customs, dying and obsolete: orally collected in the Highlands and Islands of Scotland and translated into English; vols. i and ii (1st ed., 1900; 2nd ed., 1928); vol. iii, 1940; vol. iv, 1941. The last two volumes were edited by the collector's grandson, Prof. James Carmichael Watson, whose death as an Ordinary Seaman in war is mourned by his friends, and has been described as a disaster to the cause of Gaelic, and of humane learning in Scotland. One more volume edited by James C. Watson awaits publication. (In the following, quotations are referred to as from *Carmina*, followed by the number of the rune: Nos. 1-216, vols. i and ii; and Nos. 217-351, vol. iii. Vol. iv contains varied lore.)

[2] Of all these four, the least known is Fr. Allan Macdonald's little collection, *Comh-Chruinneachadh de Laoidhean Spioradail*, Hugh Macdonald, Oban, 1893. It was privately printed, and lacks a translation and table of contents. There could be no finer memorial to this man and the community whose spiritual life he helped to record than a new edition of all its ancient Gaelic 'spiritual songs', with the addition of others he wrote down before his death in 1905, and perhaps, of some of his own poems, notably his famous *Eilean n[illegible]h-òige*, "Isle of the Young".

CH. VII SPIRITUAL LIFE OF COMMUNITY

(A) SACRAMENTS AND RUNES OF LABOUR, IN FAMILY, TEAM AND TOWNSHIP

788 221 Labour given to the winning of food, shelter and clothing was begun and blessed by poetic, rhythmic prayers or 'runes'. The words were usually reinforced by a symbolic gesture or simple rite. By help of the runes the people sought spiritual preparation for work, invoked aid and finally consecrated the thing made for use.

221 461 [171] Wherever work was rhythmic it was carried on by working songs. Songs of hunting or herding recalled the hill and pasture, or praised the landscape with an exuberant flow unequalled in any tongue we know but old Irish, with which Scots Gaelic is so closely linked, or Welsh, of which the nature classics are linked to the epics of the sixth and seventh century thought to be composed in Strathclyde.[1]

788 461 [171] Yet it was not these but the rhythmic prayers or runes which initiated labour, stage by stage. They are paralleled among many peoples, but those of the Gael possess rare fullness of meaning and beauty of imagery, words and form. When labour was ended, the food won or the clothing made was consecrated for the use of family and friends, of the poor and the stranger-guest.

788 241 In the struggle for food, the sowing and reaping of corn ranked highest, followed by its parching and grinding (*Carmina*, Nos. 88-92). The preparation of seed for its sowing was accompanied by its consecration, *an coisreageadh sioil*. Similarly for reaping: "Laying his bonnet on the ground, the father of the family took up his sickle and,

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[113] [1] Examples of these nature poems are given in scholarly prose translation by Kenneth H. Jackson (1937 and 1950). Songs with their melodies will be found in Arthur Geddes (Ed.), *The Songs of Craig and Ben*, vol. i, 1951.

175 'first-footing'. In the past the lads came in bands singing
796 carols, and once admitted—refusal of hospitality being out
178 of the question—any misunderstandings and quarrels of
the past year had to be forgiven and forgotten. With individual visits this is no longer possible, for though these maintain friendship, they cannot easily and naturally heal a quarrel.

175 From Lewis three fine carols once sung by youths are
796 recorded, of which the fidelity of Carmichael's translation
goes far to render both sense and feeling (Nos. 55-57).[1]
533 In Ness I have sought in vain for the old melodies from
[127] the descendants of Angus Gunn. Born about 1800, Gunn had lived for many years as a shepherd on the islet of North Rona, unreached by the burning zeal of the Evangelists, so that his traditional piety survived. Could they be found, these melodies would enrich the remnant of authentic Christian lore in Britain, for even the well-known English carols are mostly of modern reconstruction.

The first Christmas Hail opens, "*Ho Ri*, Hail to the King, Blessed is He. . . . Blessed be the house and all therein. . . . Lasting . . . and healthy round the hearth be ye. . . ." It goes on, "This night is the eve of the great Nativity, the great Noel [*Nochd oidhche Nollaige moire* . . .]; Born is the Son. . . ." It closes, "Shone the mountains . . . earth, and land, Heard was the wave upon the strand. . . . Blessed be the King . . . to all ages, to all time." A fragment from Tolsta, Lewis, sung by boys on New Year's Eve as they begged for a Noel bannock from house to house, latterly began and ended with playful nonsense, yet it retained its traditional climax: "[On the first day of the New Year] I saw the Threesome [The Trinity] going to the shore. The land shone, the

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[113] [1] No. 59 is set to an Eriskay chant in *Songs of the Hebrides*, vol. i, p. 159.

175 796 earth shone, The wave shone on the shore; The deer of
the mountain steep shone. . . ."[1]

533 "The Christ Child's Lullaby" is a lovely carol narrating the Christmas tale. Legend tells that it was sung by
175 'Mary-Mother' herself to an unwanted stepchild lost on
796 the moors, where his stepmother found him in the arms
533 of Mary, who sang as she lulled him. The stepmother
773 cherished this song with the lost child, henceforth loved as
her own.[2] The poetry of the Gael, like the odes of Greece
and the Psalms of the Hebrews, is luminous with the vision
of mountains, land and sea, reflecting a light within that
of sun or moon, and sonorous with the rhythm of wave,
tide and season which are "of all ages and to all time,
[181] *gach linn gu brath*". Its adoration is full of nature and of
humanity, yet it soars above mere nature worship or
anthropomorphism.

175 While Christmas, more than any, was a festival of
796 leisure, others were closely linked to labour. The festival
dates of Candlemas or Lent, of Saint Bride's, Saint
Patrick's or Lady Day, marked the stages of spring's
coming and the duties they brought. Summer came in
at Beltane—held in May, though the word included other
dates connected with spring fire; and on St. John's Day

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113 [1] Donald Macdonald, M.A., MS. essay for the Royal Scot. Geog. Society.

[2] A short version is published in the *Songs of the Hebrides*, vol. i. A translator may choose from its 29 stanzas—though all are true to the Gospel and worth translation. Of the simple choral variant of the air (as published) Fr. Allan Macdonald told Miss Amy Murray his grief that it had superseded the melodic variety given to the Lullaby when sung by one singer at a time (*Celtic Review*, 1905–6). From three variants noted from oral singing one can arrange a melodic sequence. To pass from a major variant (set to stanzas on Jesus's mother, the shepherds and the 'kings') to minor variants (set to the tale of Herod's evil deeds) restores much of the dramatic intensity of this noble carol. Only deep feeling for the Gospels could create and maintain, without written help, so full a version of the words and variety of associated melody. (The complete words, *Taladh Chriosta*, are in Fr. Allan Macdonald's collection, p. 7.)

788 (in Gaelic) by a housewife in a Catholic isle, as our friend-
592 ship matured. It had been said nightly at her fire by her
354 father-in-law until his death (not long before), which had
539 come after that of his wife. "I smoo'r the fire tonight,
As Mary's Son smoo'red. Be it well with house and fire; Be it well with all our household. Who are on this floor? Peter and Paul. Who are on watch tonight? Light-white Mary and her Son. Thus God's voice taught, And the Angel spoke: The Angel at my house door, Until the clear day come tomorrow. Amen." As this variant shows, memory still lives in the Isles.[1]

788 In these runes, the key to the words "as Mary's Son
593 and as Mary did, in their day" is the example of filial duty,
776 of wifely and motherly care. In spite of lapses to 'Mario-
latry' during periods of decadence in the Roman Church,
[779] the virtual banishment of Christ's mother from Protestantism has led to a loss deeper than Presbyterian Scotland has yet realised. Her name was a daily reminder, both of a woman's part in the spiritual life of the home, and of a son's self-discipline and affection: in a word, of mutual love.

788 For wool, the sheep were blessed, as in the "Clipping
[236] Blessing". There were blessings of the loom and of
[286] warping and weaving; and after neighbourly fulling or
'waulking' of the finished web, came its consecration.
[461] As the work was solitary and communal in turn, so the
prayer. Carmichael's own fine prose translations should be
[127] studied (*Carmina*, vol. i, Nos. 108-113; cf. vol. iv, pp.
[538] 88-99). Yet, those being available, we quote rhythmic

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[113] [1] Cf. Rev. Allan Macdonald, *Comh-chruinneachadh*, p. 107; *Carmina* (Nos. 84-87, 324-326); and M. Kennedy-Fraser, *Songs of the Hebrides*, vol. ii, p. 31. Sacred lore is not to be picked up lightly by a stranger. It was only upon the second of my prolonged stays under her hospitable roof that this good woman would admit and impart her knowledge, treasured in the secret places of her heart.

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532 warfare—destroyed its intimate tie with the home, with
614 peace. The web the women had dyed, spun, woven and
waulked together ceased to be a sacrament when the tartan
714 was proscribed to men except when worn as a uniform with
[178] " England's cruel red ".

[648] The framers of this law, which stood on the statute
book for over forty years, took full cognisance of what they
175 did. Appended to the Act of 1747 was an oath which
648 reversed every benediction said by the women at their
286 work: " I . . . do swear, as I shall answer to God at
the great day of judgment, I have not, nor shall have, any
291 gun, sword, pistol or arm whatever, and never use tartan,
782 plaid or any part of the Highland garb; and if I do,
641 may I be cursed in my undertaking, family and property—
may I never see my wife and children, father, mother,
relations—may I be killed in battle as a coward and be
without Christian burial in a strange land, far from the
graves of my forebears and kindred; may this come across
me if I break my oath ". This Act, as law and symbol,
struck full at the sacramental life of family, neighbour-team
and clan community, in which labour and prayer had been
indissolubly bound.[1]

(c) WORSHIP, CONGREGATIONAL AND PERSONAL: THE BOOK AND THE WORD

178 Little remains of the tradition of worship in the tiny
771 oratories, chapels or ' temples ' whose ruins stud the shores

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346 [1] The collaboration of friends in Lewis may allow mention of the Gaelic
version of A. Geddes, *The Spirit of the Tartan, a Song Drama* (English
172 Version); *Souvenir Programme and Book of Songs* (Outlook Tower, Edinburgh, 1932). In this the spirit of this labour sequence embodied in its
• [113] songs and runes is dramatised in its setting of custom and history. The Gaelic
version was prepared by the generous labours of James Thomson, M.A.,
Bayble, and the late Duncan Macdonald, M.A., Sandwick, Lewis.

771 single example may be given; so far as I know, it is unrecorded.
773 I learned it in South Uist, where Catholic and
[125] Protestant mingle in tolerance and sympathy; it had been
told by an old woman, a Catholic, to a young neighbour, a
[795] Protestant fisherman's son, later a minister.[1]

539 The story takes place after the Crucifixion. It may be
remembered that in the Gospels not a word is said of Jesus's
771 mother after His farewell to her from the Cross (John, xix. 26). He—or she—who first conceived the legend may have asked, would not a mother visit the tomb of the son she had just lost? And surely she who at His birth had cried, " My soul magnifies the Lord . . . my Saviour ", would be the first to seek Him out after His death? The legend tells that, on the second day of the Entombment, Mary, Jesus's mother, in an agony of mourning and suspense, visited the tomb of her son, calling upon Him with many an endearing name. From the tomb He answered that she would be consoled, for He would arise. And He told her that because of the depth of her love, of all forms of human love a mother's would be accounted the highest for ever after.

771 The Gael had fused the grandeur of the Old Testament
538 with the hope and humanity of the New; for them the
light of dawn on sea and snow awoke the light within. A
[788] last example is taken from two fragments forming part of
a single theme, perhaps of one original poem.[2] Chanted

● [113] [1] It is interesting to compare this quiet legend with the late Roman (and Episcopalian) " Apostles' Creed ", apparently based on the vivid story in the *Gospel of Bartholomew*: after Christ " was crucified, dead, and buried, He descended into hell " (hades). Montagu R. James (translator), *The Apocryphal New Testament*, 1924.

[2] *Carmina Gadelica*, 201, 197. No translation can be perfect, and Carmichael offers alternatives: line 6, " *Ti nan dul*, Being of life ", or " of the elements "; l. 13, " light on the plain " or " the land ", *fearann*. The last line is intimate and simple: " The hour (or era) God's Son came in (among us)," a *steach*, as into a dwelling.

885 in thy kertch!" and counsels her to be hospitable yet wise,
539 and courageous though calm; to be frank yet tactful,
dignified though kind. The themes of this ode's melodious
885 verse recall the virtues of a wife enumerated mnemonically
538 in the acrostic which concludes the Book of Proverbs.
593 For in that, too, there is mention of "strength and dignity,
wisdom and kindness", and the poor are not forgotten as the wife goes tirelessly about her work, sets her servants to their tasks and sells her merchandise at a profit. Yet the acrostic's emphasis on the wife's work and its gain reveal the writer as a shrewd citizen seeking to train a wife to ceaseless exertion and business dealing, with her husband's private profit and public honour as a most important end! The singer of 'The Kertch'—man or woman, one cannot tell—thought of conduct not for its profit first, but for its virtue, and dwelt upon motive, mind and heart.[1]

175 To tide over the supreme crisis of childbirth the mother
844 was strengthened in confidence, courage and calm. The
need was the greater before modern midwifery. In Sutherland as late as 1908, a good professional nurse tending a difficult case of childbirth, anxious and powerless without a doctor, found herself indebted to older wisdom. The patient's mother first filled a small basin with water into
[788] which she put trinkets of gold and silver. "She then held
the basin to her dying daughter's lips, and made her drink three mouthfuls of the water, each mouthful in the name of Father, and of Son, and of Spirit, 'the three Persons of the Trinity of kindness and power, *Tri Pears na Trianaid chaoimh chumhachdaich*'. Soon after, the child came . . .

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[113] [1] *Am Breid*, 'The Kertch'. *Carmina*, No. 215. A short paraphrase by Mrs. Kennedy-Fraser, set to a lovely air and refrain, will be found in *From the Hebrides*. First published (imperfectly) in *Nether Lochabor* by the Rev. Alexander Stewart (1883, p. 4) with delightful notes.

779 with his spouse. The knight, the first Stewart Earl of
764 Menteith, had died four years after his wife, in 1294.
532 Medieval sculpture was then attaining its height, as this
monument, in spite of the ravages of time, bears witness.
175 The following year, 1295, saw the commencement of " the
three hundred years war " with its repeated destruction
644 of Scottish arts and traditions of peace. Under King
[829] Alexander III, " that Scotland led in luve and law ", peace
within the kingdom of Scots allowed a union embracing
[648] Gaelic Christian traditions and Scoto-Norman arts. After
his death this became all but impossible. So far as scholars
181 can tell me, this almost unnoticed monument remains
764 unique in Christendom, indeed in the world.[1] The arts
of Scotland, hitherto in touch with European achievement,
were shattered by invasions, and Gaelic tradition was only
to be maintained by the very poor, whose debtors, for all
time, we have become.

763 At the approach of death God's mercy and peace were
782 sought. Latterly Roman Catholic prayers stressed the
wish for Confession to a priest, followed by Supreme
Unction for the attainment of ' Happy death ', *Bas sona.*[2]
[174] In early times confession seems to have been made as
willingly to the ' Soul-friend ', followed by Benediction.
When death had come, the mourners sang of sleep and
764 home. In Lewis today funerals are conducted in silence
to the graveside, where the last service is held; but

● [113] [1] *A unique medieval tomb at Inchmahome: a cultural link.* (Geddes, 1952.)

[171] [2] It would be of deep interest to compare the attitudes to death found in ' Spiritual Songs ' by Protestant Gaels like Buchanan or Grant, with songs on death which, though maybe of post-Reformation date, are of Roman Catholic origin (*e.g.* in Fr. Allan Macdonald's collection, poems on the Day of Judgment, and of Wrath; on age and on death; and on Purgatory: pp. 31, 85, 146; 34, 19, 21; 27). Some have much in common, both by virtue of the earlier traditions they shared and still more because of parallel trends of Reformation and Counter-Reformation. Cf. *Carmina.*

175 and of a township's tiny chapel, oratory or *teampull*.

778 [829] In Lewis, as in the Northern Isles, the early years of the Reformation period had been years of invasion by the King's Adventurers, of resistance, bloodshed and ruin. Hence when Mackenzie brought a Protestant clergyman to minister to the people they flocked to hear him. Naturally the new lord chose one of his important tenants from Kintail, the Rev. Farquhar Macrae. "For forty years prior to the visit (about 1611) no one in Lewis appears to have been baptized or married,"—or rather, no ceremonies had been performed by professional clergy, an important distinction. "'The population', we are told, 'had lapsed into heathenism', but 'Mr. Farquhar's' mission proved thoroughly successful. 'Large numbers of the people were baptized, some of them being fifty years of age, and many men and women were married who had already lived together for years.' The author also stated that the success of this mission went far to reconcile the inhabitants of Lewis to Lord Kintail's rule. According to a Kintail tradition, 'the number of people that came to be baptized by Mr. Farquhar was so great that, being unable to take them individually, he was obliged to sprinkle the water at random on the crowd with a heather besom'"[1] —much as it still is on certain festivals in the Roman Church.

[114] The tale of the Rev. Farquhar Macrae shows both the spiritual prestige of one who could read the Scriptures and must understand them, and the people's belief that a lord who brought a Gaelic clergyman must indeed be a Christian and was to be welcomed, or at least accepted. After the larger churches had been rifled by lairds, 'Pro-

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●[113] [1] Brand Report, 1902, p. xii; from Alexander Macrae, the *History of the Clan Macrae*, Dingwall, 1899, p. 57.

175 complained in Carmichael's own time, mockery is hard to
181 withstand. One can only guess, as yet, what were the real
798 effects of the decadence of Rome and the impact of the Reformation upon the landward communities of the Lowlands and Northern Isles. But the records of the Western Isles leave no doubt as to the onset of this spiritual tragedy among the Gael, of which Carmichael and others saw the later acts and of which one still finds the epilogue.

175 The grim desperation of the religious and civil wars,
798 and their persecutions—crucifixions made by every side in the name of the Cross—caused faith to be disastrously shaken. Superstition rushed into the widening cracks in older belief, aided by important sects of clergy. In the Highlands, 'witch' torture was never carried to the lengths it reached in the cities, though the last 'witch'-burning in Scotland may have occurred in east Sutherland (P. Hume Brown, *History*, ii, 1912, p. 451). But the frenzy of witch-hunting by ministers in the Lowlands, during the widespread evictions and social anarchy of the post-Reformation period, suggests that the Adventurers' invasion of the Lews, followed by the arrival of new masters and Presbyterian ministers after 1600, must have aroused morbid, anti-social fears. Lewis certainly suffered from fear of the evil eye as late as the nineteenth, and even this, century.

We have to face the effects on the people of religious strife. To ardent Reformers the Blessed Sacrament of the Roman Church was a 'Jack-in-the-box'; and at the climax of the Mass, the elevation of the Host—the moment of 'transubstantiation' with its literal interpretation of the words, "This is my flesh" (*Hoc est corpus meum*)—was so much 'hocus-pocus'.[1] Conversely, to Roman Catholics

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[113] [1] J. H. Matthews, *The Folklore of the Mass*, p. 96, 1903 (Catholic Truth Society).

775 much of Protestantism was a denial of Christianity.
778 Holders of all these forms of Trinitarian belief have united
in condemning Unitarianism as heresy, its earlier Arian
771 form having been stamped out in blood. The 'heterodox'
are held by the orthodox of many Churches to be awaiting
eternal torture. To a thoughtful humanist like Sir James
Frazer, on the other hand, the belief that one alone by
suffering can atone for the sins of others is of the deepest
significance, as being an ancient, widespread and 'pathetic
[795] fallacy'. Happily, one finds the greatest tolerance and
sympathy where Protestant and Catholic are mixed in the
[181] Isles. Elsewhere, too, sympathy and reverent enquiry are
taking the place of dogmatic assertion.[1] It is in this spirit
that we can best understand Gaelic beliefs at their highest,
and so distinguish their lowered use—or misuse for selfish
ends—from the highest use of sacrament and prayer by the
pure of mind and heart.

(B) RELIGION, MAGIC AND SUPERSTITION IN DAILY LIFE

789 Evil ends might be sought by means of the ancient runes: the power of their poetry and associations could tempt to perverted use. Carmichael tells how in Uist a malefactor, in terror of the law, went to a needy woman, and by appealing to her pity—and in exchange for a small sum—learned from her an "Invocation for Justice". Strengthened by its rhythm and imagery, and by his own associated belief in its magical power as a charm, he stood up boldly in Court, firmly asserted his innocence and got

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[113] [1] Cf. the friendly theological arguments between a Bernera Presbyterian and a Roman Catholic from Barra (*Bodach Bharraidh*—vii, viii), sketched in Gaelic by I. N. Macleoid, *Litrichean Alasdair Mhoir*, Stornoway, 1932.

789 away scot-free! Both persons secretly concerned felt that they had endangered their souls by successfully defeating justice through their misuse of the invocation. Can one [783] doubt that they were partly right in both beliefs? The malefactor's confidence had lent success to perjury, and perjury by help of prayer was deadly sin.

114 Now, the perverted use of prayer, as in this case, was clearly understood to be evil-doing; but what of magic and superstitious practices? Much has been written of 'Highland folk-lore and superstitions'.[1] The religion of the past should be distinguished from these. In *The Golden Bough*, Frazer drew a useful distinction between religion and magic. Religion, he wrote, relies upon the propitiation of higher powers—or even, in more primitive forms than Christianity, the propitiation of the forces of nature—while magic is an attempt at direct control of 121 natural forces. Superstition may be defined here as a body of beliefs and practices in which hopes and fears attach themselves to things seen or done, by a multitude of false analogies and by irrational links of effects to supposed causes. Such superstitions are marginal to the main body of belief, worship and conduct which forms religion.

At the same time, no hard-and-fast line can be drawn between folk-lore and religion, where religion is handed on as living word and ritual almost without the aid of 121 writing. This is particularly true where the religion of 771 which we think, that of the Gael, is founded upon self-supporting peasant life, in line with that of the humble, working founder of Christianity—historically native to an outlying district of his own country—and not with the

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[113] [1] D. J. Macleod, D.Litt.: (*a*) *Highland Folklore* (32 pp.), Inverness; (*b*) Introduction to Martin's *Western Isles* (edn. Stirling, 1934). N. Morrison, Hon. D.Sc., *Superstitions of Lewis*, Stornoway, *c.* 1930.

121 [771] theology and scholarship of a capital city, even of a city so small as Jerusalem! It is sometimes forgotten that the Old Testament, upon which so much of theology is built, contains folk-lore and magic. Not until this is fully understood in the sense in which early Oriental 'folk' believed it, can it be interpreted, whether as imaginative symbolism or common sense.[1] Much in the orthodox belief of medieval or post-Reformation times was mistaken; yet it formed part of the religion, not the 'superstition' of the stage and period. Theology and philosophy are in constant transformation. Sheltered scholars, priests and rulers of cities may be ill-fitted to interpret the inspiration of a religion which grew from life in field, pasture and at sea, whether in its native land of Galilee and the East or among the Gael. One must live with a people and be one of them, at least for a time, to interpret their inner life. Lastly, no generalisation is true for all members of a community: individuals differ. The same prayer, the same rite, may be used in so different a way by each of two neighbours that its use by one is religious but by the other superstitious.

114 776 We have seen that the essence of the lore from which we have quoted is not magical, but religious, in use as in inspiration. Strangers who had lost the sense of the beauty in the skies mistook a Gael's adoration of God at sunrise for prayer to the sun; when a man unbonneted or a woman knelt in the open, face turned to the rising moon lightening the dark, they confused prayer with worship of the moon itself. Now, in paganism, a belief in nature-spirits is strong: but propitiation is made not to objects such as the sun or moon, but to spirits believed to influence or

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[113] [1] W. Robertson Smith, *The Religion of the Semites* (3rd ed., ed. S. A. Cooke, 1927). J. G. Frazer, *Folk-lore in the Old Testament* (3 vols.), 1919.

114 776 dwell in them—to a sun or moon spirit. If the people once believed in a 'moon-spirit', nothing is left to show it. Either the moon is addressed as if she could hear her praise, or—more commonly—"The King of the Elements" or "of life" is thanked for sending her light. The Archangel Michael is associated with the sun's rays; but symbolically in relation to heart and mind, rather than as literal belief. The response to sunrise and sunset was real; and it is not lost among the people, as a watcher may see.[1]

178 771 788 It remains true that pre-Christian rites were re-enacted, sometimes in fear and desperation when things had gone wrong, and sometimes in mere play. A Lewisman in Carmichael's hearing spoke of "going between the two great fires of Beul" (or Baal), his phrase expressing no more than a faded memory. But in Reay, in hard times bordering on famine, a fishing skipper was seen by his small son, supposed to be asleep, to assemble his crew and, after putting out the fire on the hearth, kindle the *neid fire* by rubbing two pieces of wood vigorously together. Each man then carried a kindling back to his own home.[2]
121 Was this a religious ritual of human energy, heat and light, symbolic of forces held to be under Divine control but to be used as they used wind and tide by strenuous effort at the oars? Or was it magic, pure and simple? When men are shaken by failures and the fear of famine, prayer in word and ritual may restore hope for better things—for safety in storm and for fish in abundance as in a miraculous draught—and confidence in their powers for their work. But the same can be true of magic. And neither prayer nor

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(113) [1] For contemporary record, descriptions of sunsets have appeared in the *Stornoway Gazette* from the pen of a crofter in retirement, N. Morrison.

[2] *Carmina*, vol. ii, Notes, *Neid Fire*.

171 though the suspected person was not thereby accused of
754 ill will, he would have to make some effort to put it right.
'Cure' might be sought either by counter-malediction on the supposed ill-wisher, known or unknown, or else by prayer that the evil should be spread so widely as to be harmless, as "on all the wild birds of Heaven . . . that it would do them no harm"—a charming touch! (*Carmina*,
782 vol. iii). Prayer was the normal and the best protection, free of any malediction, and was included in general intercession for loved ones. But fears remain—not only in 'distant' isles—both in peace and in the extreme stress of war.

114 A psychotherapist of 1917–18, A. J. Brock, wrote that
155 the "War was not in essence a new thing, the ordinary life of every day being itself a sort of battle".[1] Brock brought the hard-learned psychotherapy of war to bear upon a fresh understanding of the countryman struggling against an environment with which he has got out of tune. Failing in spite of strained effort to get the food and warmth he needs for himself and his 'wife and weans', the peasant may lose happiness in home and village, and faith in the future. "How did primitive people express all this?" asked Brock, noting that the risks and casualties of bad times in the past brought fears and floating pictures comparable to those of 'shell-shocked' patients.

171 In all lands the unity of family life and labour is
776 symbolised in homelier folk-lore by the protective spirit of each homestead. As long as the work is carried on heartily and thriftily the Brownie is pleased. But the people may become negligent, or begin to labour from mercenary motives. The true spirit of the work is then upset and (in all folk-lore) the Brownies begin to give

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● [113] [1] A. J. Brock, *Health and Conduct*, 1923, pp. 155-170.

181 people, although life in crowded quarters and daily con-
cern with the rearing of animals make for a frankness not
183 readily understood by strangers in Victorian times. The
848 standard of morality in the Isles is high, and the rate
of illegitimacy low. A courting custom, once common
584 through the northern and western coasts of Britain, as in
Norway and New England, was 'bundling', a preliminary
to marriage, or bed-fellowship (*leapachas*). This is noted
[836] with disarming frankness by various writers.[1] After the
ceremonial and festivities of the betrothal, *reiteach*, a young
man was allowed to sleep beside his betrothed; but the
marriage ceremony was to precede, not follow, consummation. At wedding festivities, sweethearts found their way to the barn and took their rest together on the straw. In the shielings, too, courtship was given some freedom: trust is a necessity where there could not be total restraint.

585 To what extent marriage sometimes took place or may still occur after consummation and the expectation of a first child, only one with close local knowledge could say. 'Hand-fasting', marriage made binding only by the conception of a first child, was an ancient custom. Two things must be remembered. First, the strength of parental benediction and authority, backed by a community in which all knew one another from childhood, gave binding force to betrothal and its obligations; and ceremonies such as that of the kertching effectually replaced legal and ecclesiastical marriage when there was neither registrar, minister nor priest. Secondly, marriages blest with children tend to be happy ones. Fulfilling the cycle of life, children also provided the support to old age needed among peasants living on the edge of poverty.

● [113] [1] W. A. Smith, *Lewsiana*; and Brand Report, 1902.

175 saint, a character so eminently Christ-like",[1] and to his
793 intimate beliefs, doctrine and wide influence. The same
159 Highland roots and deep charity characterised Dr. Norman
Macleod, author of the popular classic, *The Friend of the
Gael* (*Caraid nan Gaidheal*).

121 If a student of community ventures upon an interpretation of theology, it is because, to him, any attempt to understand "the relations of God to mankind" must take account
of men's relations to one another. Ideas are transformed
by human experience during economic and social revolutions, and in their turn they transform society. To make
contact with reality, theology must regard mankind: it
175 must be integrated with sociology. Because of its close
178 bond with communal life, the religious spirit, recorded in
Gaelic lore, was jarred, almost overwhelmed, when com-
182 munity was shaken to its foundations by the commercial,
178 agricultural and industrial revolution. Happily, the value
of communal Christianity has been acknowledged both by
79 Roman Catholics—notably (among Gaels) by the Rev.
Allan Macdonald of Eriskay—and by Protestants.[2] In
the Scottish Presbyterian Church today, the movement
which seems most deeply aware of the need for a new
society has acknowledged its debt to communal tradition
where this has been best maintained, that is, in the Isles.
Seeking to aid Christian endeavour, international and
national, this movement has turned for inspiration to Iona.
[771] In Iona, of which the noble cathedral belongs to the Church
of Scotland but is open for service to all denominations,
Presbyterians have found a new symbol.

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[113] [1] Canon Vaughan, cited by the Rev. Norman Maclean (*Scotsman*, 21st Aug. 1943).

[2] "The Church should interpret the Love of God by a flaming zeal for the redress of the social order." (The Very Rev. Prof. John Baillie, Moderator of the Church of Scotland, at St. Andrews, 1943.)

175 About the seventeenth century there was introduced
433 the making of *aqua vitae*, *uisge-beatha* or 'whisky', an
addition to the ancient drink of home-brewed beer or ale
273 (*lionn*), a pleasant brew still tolerated by the Excise. In
[427] order to pay the rent, the making of whisky from home-grown barley must have consumed a precious foodstuff.
[651] The small bulk of whisky facilitated export by tacksman
or Factor, and it also served to tickle the palate, cure the
[651] ills and cheer the spirits of the crofters themselves. But
before 1800 'the Gauger' was in the land, though there
were undoubtedly whisky stills that escaped his eye. In
some of the old houses a hollow space was left at a selected
spot between the inner and the outer walls, to conceal what
was not meant to be seen. A pleasant picture survives of
[511] the eighteenth century. It is told of a man of exceptional
prosperity, that when he laid his head on a pillow "he
could hear on the one side the clacking of his corn mill and
on the other the babble of his still". What more could
[427] the good man want? Nevertheless, the increase of distillation
[671] as a legitimate home industry by which to pay the rent
(in kind or by sale), followed by legislation prohibiting all
but large stills, first encouraged the Islanders in a taste for
strong drink, then tempted them to smuggling and breaking
the law.[1] Seaforth started two distilleries at Stornoway,
importing barley for the purpose. By 1825 these had ousted
the illicit stills, but they were closed about 1870.[2]

175 From a perilously narrow margin of subsistence, periodi-
178 cally overstepped in famines, the Islanders passed to a
434 larger measure of production for sale, and in the second
433 half of the eighteenth century population increased. Its

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[113] [1] Cf. D. Stewart of Garth, *Sketches of the Highlanders*, 1821, vol. i, pt. ii, sec. v.

[2] Brand Report, 1902.

175 growth followed the increases in potato-growing and fish-
178 ing, in income and food production, and the introduction
434 of vaccination against smallpox, which had formerly taken
a heavy toll of child life.[1] This increase found an outlet
[433] in emigration to the Colonies, often led by departing tacks-
[751] men though discouraged at first by the Island lairds. For
example, in July 1773, 840 people sailed from Lewis.
175 "Alarmed by this, their master . . . came down from
434 London to treat with the remainder of his tenants. What
are the terms asked, think you? 'The land at the old
167 rents, the augmentation paid for three years back to be
refunded, and his Factor to be immediately dismissed!'"
[214] Although the *Edinburgh Evening Courant*, from which this
quotation is taken, went on to say that it was expected that
the demands would be acceded to, or the Island would
become a desert, the Factor was retained.

175 The pressure of population can be imagined when the
167 appalling conditions of transport overseas are remembered.
A case is known of 700 Gaelic emigrants setting out from
505 the Clyde across the Atlantic in a vessel for which the
maximum human cargo of negro slaves permissible was
400. The regulations governing the transport of slaves
did not apply to the transport of 'freemen'. In quoting
this case, D. F. Macdonald suggests that while it was in
the interest of slave-owners that their slaves should arrive
in the Plantations alive, it was rather in the interest of
manufacturers to discourage emigration so as to keep a
supply of labour at home with which to meet their growing
demands and fill the gaps due to a high mortality, particularly among workers newly arrived from the country.[2]
It would also seem as if it had not been in the interests of
landlords to improve passenger regulations at that time,

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[1] Brand Report, 1902, p. xiv.

[113] [2] *Scotland's Shifting Population, 1750–1830* (1941).

175 423 rent averaging 31s., in addition to which there were over 1000 houses of the cottar class and 300 houses of the squatter class.[1]

Lastly, Sir James trained no successor to follow up or improve upon his experience. At his death in 1878 Sir James was succeeded by his widow, and, nearly twenty years after, she was followed by a nephew and his son. But the expenses of Stornoway Castle and its burdens, accompanied by lower rents, weighed down the new proprietors. [228] In 1918 the estate was sold to Lord Leverhulme, who shortly afterwards purchased Harris too, with a view to his great schemes of fishery development.

(c) FISHERIES: 1750–1914

175 471 228 For the greatest expanding industry of the northern coastlands, Matheson had done comparatively little even at Stornoway. In 1883, a former Factor (Mr. Mackenzie of Calgarry) stated that he had constantly asked for aid to the fisheries, especially by the building of harbours, pointing out that the landlord would reap benefit in rent.[2] But Matheson had replied that the fishermen and fish-curers, the people engaged in the trade, should do this work [654] for themselves. By the end of the century, harbours were being planned and built with State aid in the north, west and south-east of the Island (at Ness, Carloway and Uig, [439] and Tarbert, Harris). In 1900 the Islanders possessed 150 herring boats, and in that year five boats from the Stornoway District sailed for the first time to Yarmouth, [511] and two to Lerwick. For the next dozen years there were [113] real hopes that prosperity could be maintained.

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[1] *Royal Commission on Housing*, 1917, p. 212. Cf. *Fraser Report on Cottars in Lewis*, 1888, and the recommendations by the Scottish Housing Advisory Committee, *Report on Rural Housing in Scotland*, 1937, pp. 56-63, 75-77.

[2] Brand Report (1902).

175 though also by State loans. The efforts of the Island
228 fishermen in the sixty years from 1880 to 1939 can be
summed up in the values of their boats. From 1880 to
471 1900 values rose by one-half, but had fallen somewhat
458 before the war of 1914–18 (to £20,000). Immediately after,
the purchase of steam drifters at Stornoway and the fitting
their herring boats with motors by the fishermen had
tripled the value (close on £70,000 in 1920). But markets
fell almost at once, and losses continued. By 1938 the
Island fishing fleet was valued (or overvalued) at a quarter
that figure, and was worth less than the fleet of sixty years
before.[1]

(D) THE CROFTERS ACTS, 1886–1919: TOWNSHIP, LANDLORD AND STATE

175 Centuries of cattle-keeping having left the grass moors
in good condition, the profits of sheep-farming rose after
236 1770 with the price of wool for manufacture. Protected
from foxes by modern guns, and handled in large flocks,
the newly introduced Cheviot and Blackface sheep and
[178] lambs could graze in their thousands. In many estates the
introduction of additional sheep, with the crofters' cattle,
was tried and worked; but in others the people were
175 ruthlessly evicted. Although offset by many acts of wise
236 economy and generous aid, evictions were too frequent
during the next half-century, and they engendered growing
427 bitterness.

Whereas in other Isles, and on the machar of Harris, the small joint tenantry and subtenantry were evicted in

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[113] [1] Figures 1828–33 quoted from J. P. Day, *Public Administration*, 1918; 1888–1900 from Appendix K, Report, 1902; 1912–1938 from *Fishery Board for Scotland* Tables (Table E-IB, 1912–21, and Table 15 and A.I., 1938).

175 Board, created in 1897 to develop agriculture, fishing and
671 home industries, to form new holdings, to assist migration,
427 and to provide public works such as roads, bridges and
[647] piers. These powers were further extended by the Land
Settlement (Scotland) Act of 1919, passed to provide land
for ex-Servicemen.[1]

The Crofters' Act granted to the individual crofter
most of the rights advocated by the Napier Commission,
and other advantages besides, but it did not impose upon
him the corresponding duties. As Day wrote, " The landlord was compelled to act in the interests of the crofter;
the crofter was not compelled to act in his own interest ".
[632] The Act discarded the core of the Napier Commission's
scheme, that of " a recognised local community, the township, with an executive officer, the Constable, working for
the improvement of the township, by fencing, draining
and other works, with the assistance of the proprietor ", the
whole scheme enforceable by " legal compulsion on either
[829] side ". As a Gael might say, the Act discarded *duty-right*
of members of the community to one another.

175 As a result, peace did not descend upon the Island at
423 once. The demand for land continued, followed up by
attempts to settle upon it, in spite of police and armed force.
[668] A legal victory was to be pressed home. In Lewis the

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[113] [1] A useful summary of the legislation is given by the Scot. Econ. Committee's Report, 1938, pp. 17-21, and a searching review in J. P. Day's *Public Administration in the Highlands and Islands of Scotland*, 1918, a work of real social insight.

The Act of 1919 is still the main enactment under which land settlement schemes may be undertaken in Scotland; but the Agriculture (Scotland) Act 1948 included new provision to allow the creation of holdings up to 75 acres in extent and £150 in rental. After the Second World War a more cautious policy was adopted in regard to settlement of ex-Servicemen and little progress has been made in carrying out schemes, despite many unfulfilled applications in the Hebrides and elsewhere where the demand for crofts exceeds the supply.

175 168 167 [647] some whose feelings and interests opposed emigration. Free Church ministers foresaw that the beliefs they had introduced would be shaken by travel; and their income, like that of the merchants, would have disappeared as a result of depopulation. The Congested Districts Board, however, sponsored two schemes of colonisation in 1888–89. In the first scheme thirty families, and in the second, fifty families were taken to Canada, mostly from the Island.[1] The first and smaller group repaid their loans and received their lands; but the second failed to do so, and the State was only reimbursed by sale of the land.

121 181 The story of the schemes suggests the lack of four elements needed for success: promptitude in organisation; sympathy with strictness, and a sufficiency of funds; a year's experience of new conditions or technical guidance, rather than segregation of the inexperienced without leadership; and choice of vocation as farmer or as farm servant. Many a crofter-emigrant has succeeded as a shepherd and farm hand or as an independent farmer; but not every Islesman, particularly a cottar or landless squatter, is fit to conduct a farm. Technically, an all-round experience of part-time crofting and fishing by rule of thumb does not train a man for farming in a new environment without even a year's apprenticeship. Success is possible in schemes which overcome initial difficulties by providing training, companionship and community life, in a suitable physical environment.

121 181 771 One further principle of communal life was the spiritual, which Parliament and administration failed to grasp. The most significant evidence in the Napier Commission was that of A. Carmichael; and from this the Commissioners

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[113] [1] J. P. Day, 1918, pp. 123-125, from Reports of Congested Districts Board, and Crofters and Colonisation Commissioners (Fifteenth Report).

175 language." Many Islanders would agree with the state-
178 ment that Gaelic was a barrier to economic progress.
197 It was not only Lowland schoolmasters, ignorant of Gaelic
but an educated, sensible class of men in their day, who
182 used the strap on the palms of the little children "for
[511] their good" because they could not understand English.
An active Lewis country schoolmaster, who had considerable
175 rural knowledge and experience, said to me: "I know what
197 I have suffered through life from being brought up on
Gaelic. If I had my way, I would *punish* [with the strap]
871 every child I heard speaking Gaelic in the playground!"
Had the Island School Boards wished Gaelic to be con-
sistently taught with English, they could have prevailed.

114 One may not only disagree strongly with the means—
197 the strap—but hold that enlightened bilingual teaching is
both worth while culturally and also of assistance to
871 intelligence without interfering with use in English of the
three Rs, and of secondary and higher education. Yet in
153 Lewis recent non-verbal tests in English and Gaelic show
a mean intelligence quotient depressed by about 15 points.[1]
153 The conclusion seems to be that under the present system
197 the Gaelic school child is still at a disadvantage compared
to other school children. But even more important to the
182 child's development would seem to be the expression of
121 his response to his rural environment in his own tongue.
For this the school tests and the educational code do not
fully provide; nor do the tests of life when the adolescent
Islander suddenly finds himself at work in a Glasgow
175 factory or abroad in city streets. What concerns us here
197 is the economic drawback of a lack of ready English among

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182 [1] Christina A. Smith, M.A., B.Ed., *Mental Testing of Hebridean Children in Gaelic and English.* (Scot. Council on Research in Education, vol. xxvii
(113) (London, 1948); J. L. Campbell, *Gaelic in Scotland* (2nd ed.) (Edinburgh, 1948).

423 In May 1918 Lewis was bought by Lever of Port
565 Sunlight, then Baron Leverhulme of Bolton-le-Moors (his
birthplace), the head of a great combine with 50,000 white
157 and 25,000 black employees. Meeting him in Lews Castle
124 in August 1919, Dr. Hardy and I found him troubled
by a human situation he had failed to diagnose. Short and stocky but very erect, quick-eyed and rapid of manner, and with a wide expressive mouth, he spoke earnestly of his plans; but his eyes flashed and his mouth set, as he rapped out, "They keep putting off, yet they leave the people in houses *not fit for Kaffirs*!" The question, "What objective inspired—or misled—Leverhulme to buy the Island?" is answered by his son and biographer.[1]

159 By 1917 Leverhulme had felt it was time to devolve
423 his personal authority over his business, in the interests
of its future. Hence he looked about him for an estate
433 in which he could exercise "his passion for changing the
face of nature", and his eagerness for 'planning' with drawing board and T-square, and for philanthropy.[2] He nearly bought an estate in the Midlands in order to develop it; but work had already begun there, and he wished to find a place which would be his to remodel from the start. Thirty years before, Leverhulme had visited Lewis and now in 1917 he spent a week there, motoring all over the Island. "He was enraptured . . . he saw not merely a countryside in need of more and better roads, not only a residence and grounds capable of alteration and improvement, but a problem to be solved, a human and racial problem which had so far baffled all who had tried to solve it. . . . He had been told the Lewis man was lazy,

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[1] Leverhulme (2nd Viscount), *Leverhulme: By His Son*, 1927, chap. xxvi, p. 221 ff. Lord Leverhulme, who had thought of styling himself 'Of the Isles' took the title 'Of the Lews'.

[2] Leverhulme (1927), cf. pp. 81-86.

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241 illustrates the narrow margin of habitability on these fragmented
423 holdings.

Now, in Lewis periodic pooling and exchange, or the
241 practice of *movable* run-rig on the small joint-tenants'
farms, was abolished early in the nineteenth century, except
423 upon the machar, where it still continues. Apparently the
476 strips were simply fixed where they had last been apportioned
by lot. Subdivision of the little crofts among sons
178 and grandsons followed, owing to inheritance without reclamation.
[175] Fairness gave 'the patchwork quilt' described;
but it was fairness pushed to the point of folly, for differences
in soil from one adjacent strip to another were slight!
It is otherwise with the long, narrow plough-strips which
run from the houses on the pure boulder clay down to the
sandy shore: run-rig, movable or fixed, is understandable
and necessary there. The case just cited shows how a
sensible communal tradition, such as that of '*movable*
run-rig' with periodic pooling, may degenerate into absurdity
by fixation. Happily the machar still shows the
sane maintenance of a tradition, the pooling of resources.[1]

182 In 1924-25, widespread distress in the Isles, the failure
161 of the Leverhulme endeavour, the crofters' refusal to own
their own crofts, and the emigration which followed, caused
many outsiders to forecast rapid depopulation. It was all
182 the more interesting to note the confidence in the Island's
161 future shown by buyers of the great estate, all of whom
471 knew what they were about, for they were men with
experience of the Island, of its rates and rentals and of its
people. To a wealthy man who repurchased a sporting

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[113] [1] Apportionment of lands held in run-rig in the Carloway estate is described, and the principle discussed, in *Scottish Land Court Reports*. (See *Scottish Law Rev.* vol. 28, 7; July 1940, pp. 51-54.) At the same time 'mechanisation', or the co-operative utilisation of tractors had led to pleas for 'collective farming'. (*Stornoway Gazette*, February 1944.)

CH. XI

CONCLUSION

121 The importance of the 'regional' movement is inter-
185 regional and indeed international. In the case of the
Island, international order is required for its fisheries to
438 recover, and for its weaving to find purchasers abroad as
well as at home. This in turn could allow small-holding
to find an Island market in its little burgh, Stornoway.
Without this triple basis of fishing, weaving and crofting
for its economy, Island society will break up and its culture
[182] vanish, not evolve. It is no less true that only by the best
utilisation of each regional environment, economy and
society as we find them, will profiteers be held in check
at home, and powerful peoples cease to exploit the sweat
of others.

121 A pioneer American Report acknowledges the debt of
171 regional survey for the New Deal not only to France and
Germany, but to a group of practical idealists, of geo-
[185] graphers, biologists and sociologists in Britain.[1] If nation-
ally we can be proud of Scots and British initiative in
[438] planning, we must own, until recently, to humiliating
[184] slowness in its execution, and in the mobilisation of regional
resources for social ends. The chief end of our planning
must be the re-making of society. In Britain it is not
always realised that in the great developments of the New
Deal the execution of concrete schemes which include civil
engineering, industrial expansion and agricultural con-
servation, is accompanied by real cultural achievements,
both urban and rural. Not only are geographers and
economists, technicians, industrialists, and officials called
to survey and plan the Tennessee Valley, but sociologists
and educationists are required to complete the work. Not

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[113] [1] *Regional Factors in National Planning*, National Resources Committee,
U.S.A., December 1935. Cf. Lewis Mumford (U.S.A.); and P. Geddes,
P. Abercrombie, L. D. Stamp, E. A. Gutkind, G. H. J. Daysh, and others
(Britain).

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175 427 311 a well cultivated small farm, a striking example of what can be done with this unpromising terrain. It is probably true that one of the objects of forming farms was to introduce improved methods and so set an example to the small tenants. The contrast, today, between Garynahine Farm and the nearby crofts, suggests that more than example is required.

TABLE 4

POPULATION CHANGES 1841-1851

161 162 175

District	1841	1851	Change	(%)
Carloway	554	659	+105	(+19)
E. L. Roag	581	717	+136	(+23)
Bernera	670	676	+6(1)	(+1)
L. L. Roag	217	259	+42	(+19)
Valtos etc.	711	484	-227(2)	(-32)
Uig Bay	520	426	-94(3)	(-18)
South	384	348	-36	(-9)

Notes: (1) Vuamore - 46 (-100%). Kirkibost, Linshader, etc. had already been cleared.
(2) Reef -180 (-96%).
(3) Carnish - 60 (-36%) - but completely cleared before 1861.
(Township figures are not available before 1841).

The birth of the crofting landscape.

175 427 311 632 A further mid-nineteenth century attempt to improve the productivity of the small-tenants' holdings was the lotting of runrig lands to form individual crofts. In a report to Seaforth c. 1800, the Rev. Headwick had recommended the abolition of runrig* and some lotting of crofts took place about 1811 **- about which time runrig was being abolished in North and South Uist - but many townships in Uig, as elsewhere in Lewis, escaped this lotting. In Bernera, Kirkibost was probably lotted at this time and the crofts fenced; in 1852, despite clearance, the first Ordnance surveyors were able to record the old fences (which were used as the croft divisions when Kirkibost was re-settled in 1878). The now much divided crofts of Kneep (see also fig.22) are probably of the same date. Reef appears, also, to have been lotted early, for the remnants of fences recorded by the Ordnance Surveyors in 1850-1852, (Reef was cleared in 1850), show crofts of the same general form as those of Kirkibost, and quite unlike those of the 1850 lotting. [62] Consequently, in many townships until this date, the houses remained huddled together in tight little groups, often inter-communicating one with another. The groups, or clachans, were usually set in the midst of the arable land. The runrig system had certain disadvantages, but, as a basic agricultural structure for small holders, it had two considerable advantages which may be relevant to modern conditions. Firstly, it was flexible: within it the individual's holdings varied in size and rent and it was possible, at the periodic re-allocation, to adjust the size according to family needs. An elderly person did not need to be burdened with a holding larger than he required, or was able, to cultivate; a young man with a

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[113] ** Report.... on the Condition of the Cottar Population of the Lews. (C.5265), 1888, p.37

* The essence of runrig was that any individual's arable land was in many pieces, scattered promiscuously amongst those of his neighbours. Periodic re-allocation of pieces was usual, but the period varied and in some cases was infrequent.

[TEXT CONTINUED ON PAGE 15]

TABLE 11

Land Available by Numbers of Tenants

162
241
427
233
632

INBYE LAND Acres:	No. of tenants: (a) in whole parish: (a)	No. of tenants: (b) in 'new' townships: (b)	COMMON PASTURES Acres:	No. of tenants: (a) in whole parish: (a)	No. of tenants: (b) in 'new' townships: (b)
0-1.0	1		Less than 50	88	
1.0-2.5	73	2	51-100	332	14
2.6-5.0	241	19	101-200	139	12
5.1-7.5	137	22	201-300	52	-
7.6-10	66	23	301-400	32	32
10.1-15	56	23	401-500	8	8
15.1-20	30	17			
20.1-50	29	24	940	10	10

__Note__: 'New' townships, for this purpose, are those settled since 1900.

361
632 In detail the arrangement of the townships varies. Certain features are common: all inbye land and, consequently, all settlements, are coastal (except Lochganvich). Each has common pasture adjacent to the inbye and many have further areas of common - former shieling grazings - some distance inland (figure 1). This division of the hill grazings is to some extent nominal because fences are often absent or ineffective. Uninhabited islands, on the other hand, require no fences, and are particularly valuable for winter grazing; the smaller of them provide convenient natural paddocks for bulls and tups when out of season. [171] The management of all these common pastures is controlled by the township committees. Unfortunately the most important aspect of stock management - control of numbers and maintenance of a proper balance of sheep and cattle - is almost universally neglected.

233
427
656 The total stock which each croft may put on the common pastures - the 'soum' - is defined in the Regulations. In the case of townships re-settled in the present century a specific soum is placed on each croft but, in most other cases, the old practice persists of stating the soum in terms of rent. Thus the soum of each croft may be defined as 1 cow, 1 two-year-old and 8 sheep per pound sterling rent (this is a very common souming). Such soumings have been in existence since time immemorial; they are mentioned in 1836*. Many of the Uig townships had their soumings stated by the Land Court in 1912; in most cases the soum was given "per pound sterling of rent" (presumably 1912 rent), but in a few "per pound sterling of rent payable in 1886". The rents had been substantially reduced in 1891, thus 1912 and 1886 rents were very different. Any township has a certain limited, stock-carrying capacity; therefore, if the total rental is thus changed without

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[113] * New Statistical Account, Vol. XIV, p.148.

TEXT CONTINUED ON PAGE 29

166 island girls bringing mainland men to settle in the island are rare indeed. Thus migration remains, as it has long been, a one-way traffic and this is almost certainly related to the problem of establishing technical innovation*.

Age structure

162 [121] The age structure of the population reflects the changes that have taken place in recent years. The population of Uig, as is usual in areas of declining population, is ageing. It is one advantage of a survey such as ours that the data may be analysed in greater geographical detail than is possible from the published figures in the official Census reports. This is particularly important in the crofting region where neighbouring communities may show quite different demographic - and economic - trends. Table 52 compares the 1951 Census figures for rural Lewis with those of Uig parish and with certain other districts, one (Park) remote like Uig, the other (Point) being most accessible to the urban facilities and employment offered by Stornoway. Uig has an even greater proportion of old folk than has Park, but it also has more children. This is probably related to the smaller proportion of Uig's population finding it necessary to leave the parish in search of work (16%, compare 28% from Park).

The proportion of the population over 65 years of age has increased from 17% in 1939 to 21% in 1959; it is thus more than twice the national average and well above the figure for rural Lewis. The proportion between 45 and 64 has also increased whilst that between 15 and 44 has markedly declined. The actual number of persons aged between 15 and 44 had declined from 1,263 in 1939 to 752 in 1959. It is to this age group in particular that one should look when seeking economic development but it is by no means certain that this decline is an unmitigated evil.

TABLE 52

Age distribution

	Percentage in each age group:					
	0-4	5-14	15-44	45-64	65+	
Scotland	9.0	15.0	43.0	23.0	10.0	Census, 1951
Lewis (rural)	9.0	15.7	35.1	24.3	15.9	Census, 1951
Uig	7.4	13.4	31.5	26.1	21.6	O.F.O., 1959
Park (Lochs p.)	5.0	13.8	29.4	33.1	18.7	O.F.O., 1958
Point (Stornoway p.)	8.1	16.4	28.6	30.6	16.4	O.F.O., 1960
Uig Districts						
South	9.1	12.8	31.8	22.3	24.0	
Bernera	6.4	9.9	41.2	27.0	15.8	
East Loch Roag	7.4	14.7	32.2	23.4	22.3	
Carloway	5.7	13.8	29.1	31.4	20.1	
Compare:						
Uig (1939)	6.0	15.4	39.2	22.2	17.2	Nat. Register

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[113] * For discussion of this topic see Caird J. B. and Moisley H. A.: Leadership and innovation in the Crofting Communities of the Outer Hebrides, Sociological Review, Vol. 9 1961, pp. 85-102.

TABLE 55

Proportion of resident males, aged 15-64,
in Major categories of employment

See Appendices B(2) and D(2) for details.

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	Croft-work only	Croft-work and weaving	Croft and other regular work	Croft and periodic work	No croft work	Total (100%)
Uig Parish	11	43	16	15	14	(635)
Districts						
South Uig	13	27	22	24	13	(180)
Bernera	8	36	25	19	12	(130)
East Loch Roag	9	50	11	11	19	(146)
Carloway	16	61	6	6	13	(171)

[886] Table 55 and figure 47 summarise the main sources of employment. The small group engaged in 'croft-work only' may be briefly dismissed. A large proportion of these men are elderly or otherwise infirm; a few are pensioners (e.g. retired police or service men); very few indeed are fully occupied in the agricultural work of their crofts, thus 'full-time crofters' is a misnomer in this area.

464 288 The most important category, in all districts, is 'croft-work and weaving', but it is relatively far less important in the south where there is correspondingly greater reliance on other forms of regular employment or on periodic work, i.e. casual labour.* It is difficult to overestimate the significance of weaving in all districts. It is the only substantial source of income in the parish and it should be clear from the previous chapter that weaving is not an ancillary occupation to croft work except in a few cases in the south. The weavers are not 'crofter-weavers' so much as 'weaver-crofters'. A curious distinction between Carloway and the rest of the parish is that, whereas generally weaving is young mens' work, the great majority being under 45, in the Carloway area two-thirds of [178] the weavers are over 45. The historical reason for this may be the earlier spread of weaving into Carloway than elsewhere for, although some weaving has always been done throughout the area, it only became a major source of employment south of Carloway in the last 20 years or so. Thus few of the older men in the south learned weaving when they were young. A corollary is greater dependance on the Merchant Navy as a source of employment for young men from Carloway than for those from the south.

464 Other sources of regular local employment are lobster fishing (Bernera only), gamekeeping and other estate work (Bernera shore and South Uig), and government establishments (South Uig). In addition there are the usual services - postmen, haulage contractors,

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[113] * For a detailed discussion of the significance of weaving see Moisley, H. A., Harris Tweed - a growing Highland industry. Economic Geography, 37, 1961, pages 353 - 370.

[TEXT CONTINUED ON PAGE 152]

17 or summer pastures for the tenants of Laxay and Rarnish respectively, townships on the north
175 shores of the loch. In 1775, there were four tenants in Kershader, but their place of origin
162 is unknown. In 1805, five tenants are recorded, two of them from Uig; by 1824 there were 10
34 tenants. Thus the growth of population in Lewis during the second half of the eighteenth century
31 may well have been the major reason for the colonisation of one of the least agriculturally
161 attractive districts of the island.

From Figure 1, which shows most of the thirty-four occupied places south of Loch Shell about 1828, it is evident that colonisation had extended south into the mountainous area. The evictions, which commenced in Harris in 1816, may have increased the population already there as early as 1660, for many of these families came from Harris. The numerous shielings in South Park speak of a vigorous community: it is possible that South Park was more densely populated than the northern area up till 1800.

162 During the period 1818 to 1842, when the grazier, Donald Stewart, and his brothers had a lease
175 of South Park, most of these settlements were cleared (Fig 2): in addition, between 1838 and
361 1843, 68 tenants and sub-tenants in Shieldernish, Cleiter, Seaforthhead, Lemreway, Oronsay,
311 Stiomrabagh and Isginn were removed, in all about 436 people.[1] Some 27 families were sent to
161 Crossbost in North Lochs; others went to Tolsta and Tong in Stornoway parish, and some
emigrated. The main body of those evicted settled in the townships in North Park: Marivig in 1838 had 6 tenants; by 1850, 22 are recorded. Thus the present distribution of population crystallised about 1840 and by then the townships along the shore of Loch Erisort from Habost to Garyvard were well established. The Minch coast townships from Cremore to Gravir, first settled about 1800, were greatly expanded, and Park south of Gravir became a sheep grazing devoid of small tenantry.

175 In 1844, the Seaforth family, which had held Lewis for over two centuries, sold the island to
423 Sir James Matheson. The estate management soon wrought great changes in the landscape. Until
311 1850-52, the run-rig system prevailed, a system whereby a group of joint tenants, or a tacksman
361 and subtenants, cultivated in small patches what arable land had been reclaimed, each share
241 being periodically re-allocated. The crofts, or individually held land, date from 1850-52, when
the land was lotted and most of the present crofts were formed at this period. The settlement pattern associated with run-rig was one of closely nucleated groups of houses but when run-rig was abolished, houses were built on the individual crofts.

175 In 1858, Lemreway was once again made available to crofters, most of whom came from the
162 fishing townships where population pressure was building up. After the disastrous potato famine
433 of 1846-7, and the final failure of the kelp industry from 1840 to 1844, the population of the Outer
731 Isles experienced great hardship. By the early 1850's, the lotting of the crofts and the rapid
229 development of the fishing industry brought a period of prosperity and the population grew rapidly
161 especially in the fishing townships of the Minch coast. The prosperity was such that numerous
cottars built houses on the lotted crofts, and their stock-keeping on the common was tolerated because of the demand for fishing crews. About 1884, the system whereby each boat was tied to individual fish merchants, who advanced meal and provisions against the catch, was discontinued. When this system was replaced by the auctioning of catches, such was the privation in Lewis that the Royal Commission investigating the poverty of the population in 1888 found conditions almost as severe as those prevailing during the potato famine forty years earlier. It was during this period that the Park Deer Raid occurred: Park became a Deer Forest in 1883 at the end of the grazier's
[685] lease. In 1888, as a demonstration of their grievances, a large number of crofters from the Park
townships went into the Deer Forest and killed about 200 deer, cooking the meat in the open for all to see. Some were arrested but after trial acquitted.[3] A few good fishing seasons remedied this unhappy situation and the population of the fishing townships rose to a peak in 1911.

[113] [1] Evidence given to Royal Commission of Inquiry into Crofters and Cottars 1883. (Also known as the Napier Commission).

[113] [2] Report on the Conditions of the Cottar Population in the Lews, 1888.

[113] [3] Stornoway Gazette, 27.1.59.

175 While the Royal Commission of 1883-6 was investigating Crofting conditions in Scotland, the
423 farm of Seaforthhead and Shieldernish was restored to six crofters. Six years later, the Royal
311 Commission of Enquiry into the Highlands and Islands scheduled the following land as suitable for new crofting townships: Stiemreway, Eilean Calum Cille, Crobeg, and the islands of Orosaidh and Rossaidh, a total area of 153 acres arable and 3,502 acres grazing. A further 165 acres of arable and 40,135 acres of grazing in the Park Deer Forest were scheduled as land suitable for the extension of existing holdings. The Report of the Commission considered "that in the case of Lewis, it cannot be left out of view that the congestion is very great, and the demand by crofters for access to lands now scheduled is of a very urgent nature .... The Deer Forest Commissioners do not believe that the lands now scheduled are suitable for new holdings: but were these lands occupied as common pasture by crofters, under a properly adjusted system of management, their occupation would be of much advantage to the occupants and more than outweigh the disadvantages."[4] As a result of this recommendation, the islands of Rossaidh, Orosaidh and Iubhairt, in all 90 of the 43,728 acres scheduled, were given to Marivig, Calbost, and Lemreway, respectively, as additions to the common pastures; the sheep farm comprising Crobeg, Oronsay and Stiemreway, and the Deer Forest were left undisturbed.

175 In 1924, after raiding, Oronsay was reconstituted as a crofting township, all but one of the new
423 tenants coming from the overcrowded crofts of Lemreway. An unsuccessful attempt was made by
632 squatters who had built houses at Stiemreway, to have their unofficial lots recognised, but some
311 families remained there till 1945. In 1934, fifteen small lots were cut out of the Gravir common
[163] pasture to relieve pressure on the Gravir crofts: this Department of Agriculture scheme marked the end of a century of population redistribution.

Thus the full recommendations of the Deer Forest Commission have never been implemented, but one can only conclude, after a study of the crofting economy, that greater participation by the crofters in the Deer Forest grazing would bring increased viability to the crofting community.

175 The landscape of Park has thus experienced four formative periods. Of the prehistoric era and
162 the early historical period, when the Norsemen held sway, a few archaeological sites and a large
361 number of place-names remain. From 1660 until the early nineteenth century settlement was
632 slowly established and spread over all the coastal fringe: this period saw the maximum areal distribution of the small tenantry. From 1828 to 1843, eviction stripped the entire area south of Gravir and west of Habost of population, and large scale sheep farming was extended at the expense of the small tenants. The fishing townships from Cromore to Gravir were greatly expanded at
[161] this time. From 1858-1924, three of the cleared townships were reconstituted: the population in the majority of the fishing townships continued to grow till 1911. Since 1924, fifteen new lots have been formed in Park but the population has progressively declined.

The absence of large scale resettlement since 1886 differentiates Park from most other crofting districts, but the exodus of population since 1918 and the existence of a population constantly struggling for viability in an area deficient in resources are features common to the entire crofting area.

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[113] [4] Report of the Royal Commission Highlands and Islands, 1892, (often known as the "Deer Forest Commission").

THE PATTERN OF CROFTING

427 Crofting, a distinctive system of land tenure, is confined to Argyllshire, Inverness-shire,
241 Ross and Cromarty, Sutherland, Caithness, Orkney and Shetland, the seven Crofting Counties of
178 Scotland. Small agricultural units sharing rights in common land, usually pasture but in some
423 districts arable land also, survive in 151 out of the 163 parishes, and these holdings form the
nearest equivalent to peasant communities in Britain, although only a small minority of crofters
477 own their holdings, and the true subsistence element, implicit in any definition of peasantry, has
all but disappeared.

175 Before 1886, the crofter was a tenant-at-will, with no security of tenure, and no right to
427 compensation for improvements. The Crofter's Act of 1886, defined a croft as an agricultural
241 holding in a parish where there existed, or had existed, rights of common grazing, and where the
423 annual rent paid was less than £30. Security of tenure, and compensation for improvements
were the main provisions of the 1886 Act; the rent qualification was later raised to £50. In all,
there are about 20,000 crofts in Scotland today[1] and Collier[2] estimated the crofting population at
[161] about 100,000. The number of crofts in Park is 215, with population of 908. Thus Park forms
[162] a 1 per cent sample of the crofts, and a 0.9 per cent sample of the estimated crofting population.

Crofting Organisation, Layout, and Settlement.

423 The characteristic settlement unit is the crofting township: Figure 3 illustrates the areal
427 distribution of the 12 townships in Park. Each township comprises two main elements, the
361 individually held croft land, and the common grazings. The number of crofts per township
311 ranges from 6 in Caversta to 43 in Gravir.

432 The individually held croft land (1,839 acres) is partly 'outrun' or permanent pasture and the
233 holdings are usually but not always consolidated - in Gravir (Fig. 4) and Cromore some of the
crofts comprise as many as five non-adjacent pieces of land. Each croft is normally separated
from neighbouring units by a drystone dyke or fence but in Park, such demarcation is the
exception rather than the rule.

The croft land is separated from the common pasture by the township dyke, a stone or turf wall. The Park common pastures consist of 22,023 acres of moor grazing - generally very poor, ill-drained land with a large percentage of bare rock, areas of peat, and numerous lochs. In Park, only Oronsay common pasture is fenced, the limits of the remainder being faintly marked by crumbled turf dykes. Each croft has a defined right of grazing or 'soum' on the common pasture; the 'soum' is the number of beasts which may be pastured, a term comparable to the obsolescent 'gates' of northern England. In Gravir, the soum is 1 cow and follower or young beast, up to 6 quarters old (i.e. 18 months), and 8 sheep, per £1 rent. There is also a system of stated equivalences (Gaelic 'coilpeachadh') in most townships whereby substitution of cattle for sheep and sheep for cattle is permissible: in Gravir, the exchange rate is one cow for five sheep. Soumings and equivalences vary throughout Park. In former times, when a subsistence economy prevailed, soumings were enforced but nowadays the majority of the crofters do not even know the souming of their croft.

[113] [1] Crofters' Commission, Annual Report 1958.

[113] [2] Adam Collier, "The Crofting Problem", 1953.

427 241 [221] [423] [178] [232] Although the croftland is individually held, individual control of the crofts only applies for six months of the year. After the harvest, the croft land reverts to common grazing and the whole township stock graze indiscriminately over the crofts. Thus basically the whole area of the township, the individually held crofts and the common pasture, is common land, and it is clear that the agricultural revolution with its system of enclosure has not yet fully refashioned the Crofting Area.

175 233 Before 1900, there was a third element in the crofting landscape, the shieling (Gaelic - 'airigh'). The sites of the shielings are usually on slopes commanding a view of the surrounding area near a spring or stream and usually two to nine huts belonging to the same township are grouped together on a site; isolated shielings are rather rare. In order to conserve the pasture within the township dyke for wintering and to protect the unfenced crops, the cattle were removed to the hill early in June, and the younger members of the households went out to live in small stone or turf-walled huts to tend the cattle. The milk was either carried back to the township daily or made into butter or cheese at the shieling. The distance of shielings from the crofts varied from one to five miles in Park.

632 The affairs of the townships are managed by the Grazing Committee, elected triennially by the township and presided over by the Clerk of the Committee. The duties of the Committee in the past related mainly to the enforcement of soumings, but are now reduced to the disbursement of subsidies, although responsibility for the maintenance of the township dyke and the care of the township bull (usually lent by the Department of Agriculture but sometimes communally owned) are also the province of the Committee.

[361] 342 [78] The layout of the townships varies with the topography but the majority of the crofts are aligned in strips from the moor to the sea (figures 4 and 5). Most croft houses are built on the crofts; in former times, the majority of the houses were sited on the poorest part of the croft as all the cultivable land was required for crops, but nowadays the houses tend to be sited near the road.

162 361 427 241 [464] The official pattern of crofting is thus one of tenants, each living on his or her croft and sharing in the rights and duties of the township. Table I gives an analysis of the tenants of the 215 Park crofts. It will be noted that only one-fifth of the crofts are tenanted by those in the 15-44 age group: a similar proportion are tenanted by those over 65 years of age. Absentee tenants account for 14 per cent of the total. Women form under 10 per cent of the total, but only one in seven of the women tenants is the sole labour force on the croft. The intrinsic worth of the holdings can be inferred from the fact that two-thirds of the male tenants in the insurable age group take supplementary work, two-fifths of them furth of Lewis. With such a large proportion of the tenants either fully employed in ancillary occupations in Park or elsewhere it is hardly surprising that the theoretical township organization exists mainly in name alone.

427 241 Each croft, however, is not necessarily an agricultural unit; some are sublet by absentee tenants or by tenants who are too old or too infirm to work their crofts. Of the 215 crofts, one-fifth are wholly or partly sublet. In addition to the legal crofts, there are unofficial holdings which fall into three categories, cottars, squatters and feuars, all legally without grazing rights. A cottar[1] is a person, usually a close relative of the tenant, who builds another house on

[1] These are the de facto definitions. Section 34 of the Crofters' Act of 1886 defines a cottar as follows:- "Cottar" means the occupier of a dwelling-house situate in a crofting parish with or without land who pays no rent to the landlord, as also the tenant from year to year of a dwelling house situated in a crofting parish who resides therein, and who pays to the landlord therefor an annual rent not exceeding six pounds in money, whether with or without garden ground, but without arable or pasture land". For fuller treatment, see Scott, J., "The Law of Smallholdings in Scotland," 1933, pages 152-155. [113]

There is no legal definition of a squatter, and the above definition does not include any distinction between houses built on a croft and houses built on the Common Grazings.

Types of ancillary employment

241 464 The question of the desirability of ancillary employment in a crofting district is often debated. On the one hand, engaging in such work means less time for croft work and makes wholehearted participation in the agricultural life of the township a virtual impossibility. On the other hand, crofters who take ancillary employment are better able to make capital investment in their croft. Table IV shows that in Park, croft efficiency, as expressed by the souming 000 to actual stock ratio, is not necessarily related to participation in ancillary employment. If the township is to be re-established as a working entity, a clearer dichotomy in the population seems desirable; those who wish to work the croft on a full-time basis might be given full use of the available land, and those who wish to earn their living in non-crofting employment could take out feu charters for their houses. It is clear that the agricultural resources of Park are insufficient to maintain the present number of crofts as viable economic units but the problem of finding industrial employment for any large non-crofting population is very great.

184 464 The Park Association, in their keen search to attract industry, met with little response for high freight rates and distance from markets made economic industrial costing well-nigh impossible. The Chairman of the Crofters' Commission has recently suggested that some of the Glasgow Overspill of "tradesmen and small businesses" might find "an opportunity to prosper in the West Highlands and Islands"[1] but even with Government grants for the establishment of small factories, it is clear that present freight charges would be a severe deterrent.

178 228 One possibility is that the fishing industry might be revived. In 1945, 16 large motor vessels were fishing from the townships between Cromore and Gravir; by 1952, three boats remained;[2] only one boat was still fishing in 1958. The recent Fishing Board Scheme guarantee, which provides a flat weekly rate for every boat turning out, brings hope as this [435] [452] guarantees a minimum livelihood. The major problem is the finding of the initial capital required to buy and fit out a modern boat, at present about £20,000. Eighty-five per cent of this sum can already be found in the form of grants and loans from the Herring Industry Board but the remaining fifteen per cent or £3,000 is often the more difficult sum to raise. The Murdo Macaulay (Rhodesia) Trust has offered assistance to a limited number of fishermen towards the raising of the £3,000[3], and this offer is a real opportunity. If fishing is not re-started soon in Park, few of the original fishermen will remain to instruct the new generation.

484 [312] Tourism is an industry hardly developed at all in Park. Lack of running water has made the householders shy to offer accommodation, but it should be remembered that there are city dwellers who are delighted to accept inexpensive accommodation away from the crowded resorts. Dr. Stig Jaatinen, in his "Human Geography of the Outer Hebrides"[4], states that this fact has made the Aaland Islands prosperous, and believes that tourism on simple lines could be successfully developed in the Outer Hebrides. Tourism need not bring in its train the desecration of the Sabbath for people who are willing to journey far in search of a quiet holiday usually conform to local observances.

464 Unless new sources of employment are brought to Park, it is clear that ancillary employment must continue to be sought elsewhere. The higher 'spending standard' in industrial employment, and the opportunities to find entertainment in urban areas (tastes often resulting from experience during school days in Stornoway or National Service), militate against a large population of young people, but basically lack of employment and the uneconomic nature of the crofts are the real reasons for the high degree of temporary and permanent employment away from Park.

[1] Letter to the Glasgow Herald 27.1.59
[2] South Lochs Survey Report.
[3] Stornoway Gazette 27.1.59
[113] [4] Stig Jaatinen, Acta Geographica XVI, No. 2. 1957.

229 The West [Lemreway] Highland Survey Township Card[1] describes Lemreway [Orinsay] as "predominantly a fishing
176 township". The remains of an old curing station are visible today and until 1947 there were twelve
boats operating from Lemreway. A declining market, increasing cost of gear for obsolescent boats
[434] and the lack of a landing stage led to the decline of the industry in this township. Today there is
[435] one fishing boat which lands its catch in Stornoway: working with modern equipment, drift and ring
[504] nets, it provides a regular income for a crew of six.

161 An examination of the population statistics proves interesting, especially when compared with
162 those for Orinsay. Lemreway's resident population of just over 70 males and 70 females is large
considering that there are six unoccupied crofts. Eleven of the crofts have more than one house
and the cottar population forms over a third of the total residents. More than two-thirds of this
resident population is in the two important age groups - between 15 and 64. With over forty
resident males in the working age group, Lemreway provides a striking contrast to other crofting
townships in Park.

[463] *Fourteen of these men are full-time croft workers, while nine others find work in ancillary
[241] occupations such as weaving and fishing. A further eight supplement their croft work with regular
[286] employment - a postmaster and a postman, a bus driver, a lorry driver and several weavers. Just
[228] over thirty people work away from the township permanently, fourteen in the Merchant Navy and
[205] nine girls in domestic service, while a further nine engage in seasonal work.*
[494]
[166] Emigration from the township has continued steadily with forty people leaving since 1939.
[167] Nevertheless, Lemreway has a larger proportionate resident population than most townships.
[505]
[357] Only four thatched houses are occupied and housing conditions generally are good. Every house
342 has electricity, but, with four exceptions, water has to be carried from springs and wells. Most
344 of the present houses were constructed in the 1930s and they are usually near to the road. Ruins
342 of the old houses remain, some being used as byres, and these were built either along the shore or
361 up the slope in the shelter of the hills, where the house was near the sheep, the peat and the springs.
Today supplies of food, peat and even seaweed are brought by road.
[491]

484 Mention must be made of the possibilities of the tourist trade in Lemreway with its most
attractive situation and reasonable road connections. An approach has been made to the Scottish
Youth Hostels Association and while hostellers could not greatly increase the income of the residents,
[485] they would stimulate interest in the area. Accommodation for summer visitors, other than relatives
of the crofters, is difficult to find but it seems that at least three houses could be used.

000 It is possible to be optimistic about the future of Lemreway, as at the moment considerable
407 enterprise is being shown. A Ferguson tractor, bought this year by a man returning from whaling,
is an example. It is to be hired out and could be put to good use in some parts, especially on the
311 outend. The attempt to improve the common pasture and the new extensions to neatly painted houses
242 all reflect a combined effort to improve conditions. The old economy of crofter-fisherman is
being adapted to modern times and crofter-weaver, crofter-postman and crofter-bus driver are the
463 contemporary employment combinations.

181 The pessimism and apathy noticed in many crofters is to be found in Lemreway but above this
is the impression of enterprise. If Lemreway can continue to adapt itself to changing conditions,
000 it may be able to combat the 'drift to Glasgow' and continue as a successful community.

ORINSAY

Beth Blowers, Brenda Turner and John Wearmouth

131 Orinsay is a small crofting township clustered, in the form of a horseshoe, around the head of
361 a sheltered bay on the northern side of Loch Shell. Most of the houses are situated within fifty yards
241 of the shore on a narrow strip of level land, while the crofts extend from the shore on to the moor

[113] [1] The Directors of the Crofting Survey are grateful to Dr. F. Fraser Darling for granting access to the individual Township Cards, which are a storehouse of information. For detailed contents of the cards, see West Highland Survey p. 247.

161 Table XIX summarises the population structure and trends for the four districts. It is significant
162 that the two districts without service centres, which provide a range of ancillary employment, have
166 experienced more severe depopulation since 1939. This table also underlines the fact that earnings
167 from seasonal employment are insufficient: the incidence of permanent employment furth of the
districts is three times as great as the incidence of seasonal employment.
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APPENDIX B

SHIELINGS - A NOTE

John E. Wearmouth with illustrations by Beth Blowers

175 From Figure 1, compiled from the First Edition six-inch map of the Ordnance Survey (1850
233 to 1852) and from personal observations, it is clear that the shieling system was at one time
an overall feature of Park for the whole peninsula has traces of this transhumant economy.

361 The rudimentary structures, some of turf, others of stones and roofed with bracken or
342 heather thatch, are all sited on well drained sites, the majority on mounds. Almost all the
sites are close to lochs or streams. The majority are in loose groups of from two to nine
buildings, although there are some in isolation; no site has as many as twenty-six buildings
as found at Airidh na Gaoithe in North Uist.

342 There appears to be two distinctive shapes of building - oval and rectangular (Fig.10).
All shielings measured exhibited a remarkable similarity in dimensions, from 17½ by 9 feet
to 13 by 12 feet. The oval structures are generally larger than the rectangular ones. Most
of the shielings had two entrances, often, but not always, opposite each other.

175 The shieling system died out in Park about 1880 but the cattle continued to graze around the
233 shielings on the better grass, and the crofters had still to go out to milk the cattle at the shieling,
although they no longer lived there. The sheep still use the mounds for shelter and grazing.
These features of an obsolete economy are still easily recognisable from the luxuriant grass
cover in a wilderness of peat bog and bare rock.

APPENDIX C

NORSE SETTLEMENTS NAMES IN NORTHERN PARK, LEWIS

Bridget M. Gordon, B.A., B. Litt.

103 See: Magne Oftedal, The Village Names of Lewis in the Outer Hebrides; in Norsk Tidskrift for
113 Sprogvidenskap, vol. XVII, 1954, (Oslo), pp. 363 ff.

103 Professor Oftedal points out the difficulties of these Norse-Gaelic settlement names: inaccurate spellings even in modern times, and lack of any useful evidence from older sources, make almost all the derivations a matter of conjecture. Sometimes two or more ON equivalents are possible (e.g. for Calbost), sometimes no satisfactory solution can be found (e.g. for Lemreway). Since Professor Oftedal frequently bases his explanation on pronunciations not recorded in written forms, his evidence is largely followed here.

SHIELDERNISH: the second element is N nes, 'headland'. Oftedal's explanation of the first as silda, genitive plural of N sild, 'herring', is satisfactory linguistically, but seems unlikely in meaning.

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6: Ducey E-4.5 (1953-1954) 1956 ES10 Highland Scots ES10 Skye

TABLE 1

POPULATION OF THE ISLE OF SKYE, THE WESTERN HIGHLANDS AND ISLANDS, THE SEVEN CROFTING COUNTIES, AND SCOTLAND BETWEEN 1755 AND 1951 WITH PERCENTAGE INCREASE OR DECREASE IN INTERCENSAL PERIODS

YEAR	ISLE OF SKYE		WESTERN HIGHLANDS		SEVEN CROFTING COUNTIES		SCOTLAND	
	Population	% + or -	Population	% + or -	Population	% + or -	Population	% + or -
1755	11,252	-	114,884	-	257,183	-	1,265,380	-
1801	15,788	8.1	153,643	6.3	302,817	3.3	1,608,420	5.9
1811	17,029	7.9	165,074	7.2	318,266	5.1	1,805,864	12.3
1821	20,827	22.3	190,907	14.5	362,184	13.8	2,091,521	15.8
1831	22,796	9.5	200,955	5.1	388,876	7.4	2,364,386	13.0
1841	23,074	1.2	200,253	-0.3	396,045	1.8	2,620,184	10.8
1851	22,536	-2.3	190,728	-4.9	395,540	-0.1	2,888,742	10.2
1861	19,591	-13.1	174,983	-8.3	380,440	-3.8	3,062,294	6.0
1871	18,114	-7.6	168,359	-3.9	371,840	-2.5	3,360,018	9.7
1881	17,680	-2.4	167,928	-0.3	369,453	-0.5	3,735,573	11.2
1891	16,478	-6.8	164,281	-2.2	360,367	-2.5	4,025,647	7.8
1901	14,561	-11.7	158,738	-3.4	352,371	-2.1	4,472,103	11.1
1911	13,282	-8.8	151,085	-4.9	341,535	-3.2	4,760,904	6.5
1921	11,584	-12.8	140,946	-6.9	326,000	-4.5	4,882,497	2.6
1931	10,345	-10.7	127,081	-9.3	293,212	-5.7	4,842,980	-0.8
1951	8,603	-8.4	119,071	-3.2	285,667	-1.3	5,095,969	2.8

Sources: James Gray Kyd, *Scottish Population Statistics* ("Publications of the Scottish Historical Society," Vol. XLIII; Edinburgh: Scottish Historical Society, 1952); R.S. Barclay and F. Fraser Darling, "Studies in the Rise and Decline of the Population in the West Highlands and Islands of Scotland," in F. Fraser Darling, *et al.*, *The West Highland Survey* (Mimeographed, 1950), Part III; and Scotland, *Census of Scotland, 1951* (Edinburgh: Her Majesty's Stationery Office, 1953).

121 by the ability of the culture to maintain its form in the face of changes in content.

The inhabitants of the Isle of Skye, of course, should not be regarded as possessing a folk culture. To do so would make an airy nothing out of a concept already so indefinite that its usefulness is suspect.[9] They are, however, much akin to European peasants. Like European peasants in general,[10] the Skye crofters have lost much of their isolation, their former political independence, and their self-sufficiency. At the same time, they have retained a good deal of their former identity, a continuity of culture and an attachment to the land and to the traditional way of life. This is true despite chronic social instability and a passage through two periods of threatened social and cultural disintegration. The breaks proved to be only temporary. They involved the creation of a new cultural focus to replace the former integrative pillar in the first period and later a reaffirmation of the new focus. This does not mean there was a lapse of continuity. A comparable situation is found in the culture history of the Pueblo of Southwestern United States. Archaeologists tell us that the sequence has been broken, in particular at the end of the Pueblo III when the culture underwent a reorientation and a shift in locale. Even though the Pueblo were never again to live in the San Juan River drainage and

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[9] Oscar Lewis, Life in a Mexican Village (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1951), pp. 432-434. See also Steward, op. cit., p. 113.

[113] [10] Kroeber, op. cit., p. 284; and Kimball Young, Sociology: A Study of Society and Culture (2d. ed.; New York: American Book Co., 1949), p. 230.

Wider Applications

/61 The decline of rural population is not peculiar to the Highlands of Scotland. There are areas of southeastern Scotland, including some long celebrated for cattle and grain, which have lost nearly as many people as the crofting counties. Berwickshire, for example, is one of the richest farming districts in Great Britain. The population trend, however, has been much the same as that of the Highlands.[44] In 1801 there were 30,206 in the county. After a peak in 1861, there was steady decline until now there are only 24,770, a decline of 32.3 percent. The loss of rural population is a well known phenomenon beyond Scotland's borders. It has been a persistent problem in Ireland and Wales for more than a century. Indeed, it has been a familiar phenomenon in Western Europe since the days of the Industrial Revolution. The only notable exception appears to be Italy; her rural population has increased 40 percent in the last four decades. The same tendency for decrease is found in the United States in such different areas as the Appalachians, the midwest, and, as has been observed, New England.

Population decrease has also been the fate of many primitive peoples. The Island of Yap, for example, has lost a remarkable proportion of its former population in contrast

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[113] [44] Census of Scotland: Berwickshire, 1951.

their mother. While the father is the disciplinarian, both children are expected to respect the wishes of their mother, except that a boy can never be asked to do the work of a woman. At the same time, however, in the absence of a boy, a girl will take his place in the division of labor. The high status of the male and the subservient position of the female has persisted over the centuries. Always, male and female relationships are reciprocal and complimentary. 594 562

The patterns of interaction and the statuses and roles which are manifest within the nuclear family on Skye are much the same as those described for the Irish small farmers.[15] The main difference is the occupation of the Irish farm by a three generation family group. Comparable family structures are found in the United States among the old Order Amish and, apparently, among the mountain people of the Southern Appalachians, many of whom are descendants of Scottish and Irish migrants.[16] Under Le Play's classification, the Skyeman's family is the famille-souche or stem family.[17] Although strongly patriarchial, the family on Skye has been weakened by economic limitations. At the same time, the Sgiathanach, as a member of both a nuclear and an extended family, has not lost his attachment to the land, to his kinsmen, or 594

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[15] Arensberg, op. cit., pp. 55-63; and Arensberg and Kimball, op. cit., pp. 63-74.

[16] Kollmorgen, op. cit.; and Faith M. Williams, "Variations in Farm-Family Living," in Economic and Social Problems and Conditions of the Southern Appalachians (Washington, D.C.: United States Department of Agriculture, 1942), pp. 137-154. For the background of the Southern Highlander, see J. C. Campbell, The Southern Highlander and His Homeland (New York: Russell Sage Foundation, 1921).

[17] See Loomis and Beegle, op. cit., pp. 57-59, 61-62.

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TABLE 3

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CROFTS, CROFTERS, ARABLE ACREAGE, AND SOUMING RIGHTS IN THE KILMUIR TOWNSHIPS

Township	Crofts	Crofters	Arable Acres[a]	Common Grazing	Souming
Bornesketaig	47	35	4	273	2 cows, 1 calf, 12 sheep
Hungladder	14	9	5	236	2 cows, 1 calf, 10 sheep
Balgown	4	5	13, 14, 34, 46, 66	177	4 cows, 4 calves 26 sheep
Kilvaxter	12	11	27	...b	4 cows, 4 calves 26 sheep
Linicro	19	17	15	729	5 cows, 5 calves 40 sheep 1 horse
Peingown	3	4	18	187	7 cows, 7 calves 20 sheep 1 horse
Herbusta	8	8	12	308	3 cows, 3 calves 26 sheep 1 horse
Totescore	12	13	21	500	3 cows, 3 calves 20 sheep 1 horse
Monkstadt	3	3	27, 27, 5	420	9 cows, 9 calves 40 sheep 2 horses

[a] Arable acres are given in average acres per holding, unless otherwise indicated. Except in Bornesketaig and Hungladder, arable land includes outrun, improved pasture land individually held.

[b] Shared with Kilvaxter.

[113] Sources: Compiled from The Valuation Roll of the County of Inverness, 1953; information extracted from the files of the Department of Health for Scotland; and data supplied by the Department of Agriculture for Scotland.

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162 Throughout the present century, the commercial importance of fishing, judged on the basis of income, numbers of crofter-fishermen, and boats, has steadily declined. The number of crofter-fishermen has decreased at a faster rate than the decline in population. In recent years its significance as a part-time chore has also been reduced. Wage labor has replaced fishing in the economic pattern. In 1900 there were 1,015 crofter-fishermen with 485 boats.[22] While the number of fishermen rose to 1,039 in 1905, from then until now their number has fallen steadily. In 1953 there were 237 crofter-fisher-
228 men with 120 boats. Despite higher prices, the value of fish
[433] landed on the island is one-third that of 1900. In 1952 the total contribution of fishing to the local economy was £10,091. This is in marked contrast to the Outer Hebrides where fishing
[262] brings in more money than crofting.[23] Fish have, of course, remained essential in the diet. All the crofters have their barrel of salt herring, purchased from mainland curers. Their own fish is usually sold for fish meal.

All who have considered the "Highland Problem" have stressed the need for some form of secondary employment to support the economy. Fishing has enjoyed great popularity as a recommended industry. This is due to the long tradition and the importance of fishing in the Outer Isles.[24] There are several pitfalls in the program as far as Skye is concerned.

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[113] [22] "Creek Returns for the Isle of Skye,—1890-1953," Fisheries Division, Scottish Home Department, Edinburgh, Scotland (in the files of the Division).

[23] Hance, op. cit., pp. 81, 89, 134.

[24] Ibid., pp. 89-110.

is no doubt that trawlers and seine netters have swept away lines and gear, particularly earlier in the century. There is evidence that the use of the trawl net has led to more extensive and intensive fishing, causing a depletion of the quantity of marketable fish.[28] On the other hand, there is also conclusive evidence that the seine net and the new, large mesh trawl net allows the smaller fish to escape unharmed. The crofter, who continues to use hand lines, accounts for a negligible share of the catch. This is not a local problem, however. It concerns the entire European continental shelf.

The International Fisheries Convention has prescribed changes in mesh sizes in the interest of conservation, but agreement on the limit of territorial waters is another problem. Unless Great Britain decides to follow the precedent established by Iceland and Norway and extend her present three mile limit, only agreed limitation by the ratifiers of the Convention can reduce the intensity of fishing in the Minch, as in any extra-territorial waters. Fully aware of the advantages which would accrue to inshore fishermen from closing the Minch, the British Government has taken the position that it would be contrary to the best interests of the nation.[29] Such an infringement on the "freedom of the seas" might be followed by adverse effects on her naval, maritime, and fishing interests for other nations might follow agricultural economy. Some may share my feeling that a further exploration of these similarities would reveal evidence indicative of cultural continuity. We have three peoples who have had ample opportunity for divergence and yet have retained many essentials of Celtic culture. Moreover, all have been losing population since the middle of the last century. Unfortunately, at the present time, I am not prepared to extend this comparative approach. I am detered by a recognition of two facts.[11] First there is the difficulty that peasant peoples all over the world seem very similar despite their distinctive cultural and historical backgrounds. There is, of course, diversity within similarity. Second there is the truism that the higher socio-cultural level of which the peasant is a part influences the form peasant life may take.[12] Although Anglo-Saxon and Norman influence impinged on the Welsh several centuries before it seriously threatened the Irish and Skyemen, the three groups have been subjected to basically similar stimuli for several hundred years. 121

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[28] C. M. Younge, Professor of Zoology, University of Glasgow, "International Measures to Limit Overfishing," Glasgow Herald, Feb. 23, 1954.

[29] Glasgow Herald, Dec. 15, 1953 and Jan. 27, 1954.

Another question which may be asked is, has the culture continued to provide meaningful patterns of interaction for the Sgiathanach? One means of answering this question is provided by Durkheim's theory of anomie. According to Durkheim, 121 [182]

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[11] Cf., e.g., Oscar Lewis, "Peasant Culture in India and Mexico;: A Comparative Analysis," Village India, ed. McKim Marriott ("Memoirs of the American Anthropological Association," Memoir No. 83, 1955), pp. 145-146. [113]

[12] Cf., e.g., Wagley and Harris, "A Typology of Latin American Subcultures," American Anthropologist, LVII, No. 3, pp. 431-448.

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